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WITCHCRAFT MAGIC & ALCHEMY

BY

GRILLOT DE GIVRY

TRANSLATED BY

J. COURTENAY LOCKE

WITH 10 PLATES IN COLOUR
AND 366 ILLUSTRATIONS IN THE TEXT

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As phenomenologists we suspend judgment as to whether the apparition is really real (a question for scientific naturalism) and attempt rather to understand what people do when confronting stress. If men define situations as real they are real in their consequences.

- **Social Scientist, Cynthia Nelson (American University in Cairo)**

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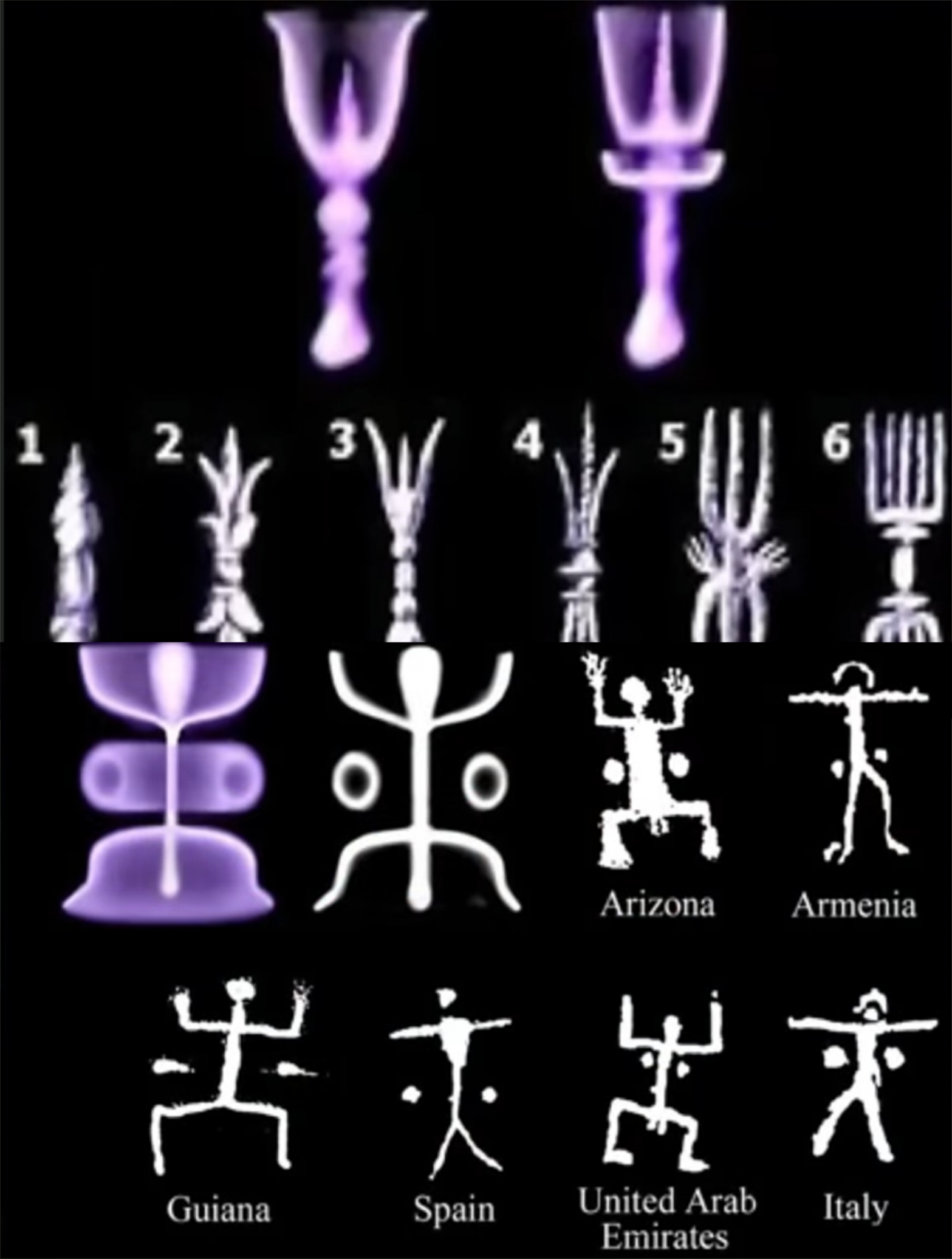
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WITCHCRAFT
MAGIC & ALCHEMY

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PREFACE

THIS book needs no explanatory introduction. Enough will be done in this way by pointing out that no work of the sort has hitherto been attempted—a fact which at first sight may well seem incredible. My own work will therefore find its justification in the need for filling a gap and in the eager curiosity which it should not fail to excite.

The secret sciences held a large place in the social life of times past. The documentary treasure, moreover, which they have left behind them is immense; but the curse enshrouding them has contributed in great measure to preventing the diffusion of this.

In my *Anthologie de l'Occultisme* I have already given a selection of especially characteristic texts chosen from authors whom one knows, in general, only by hearsay and through the mist of legend, which ignorance inevitably substitutes for the truth. The same work remained to be done for the most living part of this wealth of documentation—that is, the pictorial part, which, in very various shape, illuminates the most abstruse doctrines with a commentary of instant lucidity and affords disturbing proof of so many unbelievable tales.

A collection of the iconography of occultism containing everything with which it is essential to be conversant was, in short, lacking, and the necessity for it was all the more acute as hieroglyphic expression was employed by these obscure sciences with even greater freedom than by the religions which condemned them, and as symbolic language plays an exceedingly important part in them. Unfortunately, persons reputed serious have exerted themselves so long to create an atmosphere of disparagement around these sciences that it was by no means easy to discover the materials for such an iconography, buried as they were in the dust of old books, till recently despised and scarcely glanced at now, even if their existence is suspected.

I have accordingly gathered together and explained in this book more than three hundred and fifty pictures, picked from the most curious, characteristic, and rare of those illustrating works on sorcery, magic, astrology, cheiromancy, cartomancy, and alchemy, including works in manuscript and incunabula form. The dates of the selected sources range from the Middle Ages to the eve of the nineteenth century. This collection will open entirely new prospects to those merely curious to glance at an important chapter in the anecdotal history of peoples commonly but little known. Those learned in occultism, also, will find it of indisputable use in placing at their

disposal a body of documentation not otherwise procurable except at the cost of patient and laborious research in libraries. It is on this account that I have chained myself to a rigorous precision. Every document not original or not bearing an evident authenticity has been strictly excluded, while those selected have been reproduced in every case from the originals. For easy verification citation of sources has been given in scrupulous detail.

I have placed my own collection under contribution, and have drawn largely upon the Bibliothèque Nationale, the Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal in Paris—which contains an unequalled store of occultist manuscripts—and upon many other libraries in France and abroad. My warmest thanks are due, in particular, to the following: to Dr P. C. Molhuysen, Librarian of the Koninklijke Bibliotek at The Hague, who was so good as to send to Paris for my use the exceedingly rare work of Abraham Palingh, pictures from which will be found at pp. 82, 154, and later; to Maître Maurice Garçon, a lawyer who shares my interests and has specialized in the defence of cases of sorcery, to whom I owe the beautiful plates from Knoll's *Vierzig Kupferstiche* facing p. 38 and at p. 39; to M. E. Nourry, who lent me the engraving of "Robert III of Artois attempting to cast a Death-spell" (reproduced at p. 193), which is not to be found in the libraries; and to M. Paul Chacornac, for permission to reproduce from a precious alchemical manuscript in his possession the splendid coloured plate of the Hermetic Androgyne forming the frontispiece to this book.

I must not omit to express my gratitude to M. Le Sieutre for generous help in the arrangement of the iconographic material.

GRILLOT DE GIVRY

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Basile Valentin, *L'Azoth des philosophes* (Paris, 1660).

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THE HERMETIC ANDROGYNE

Reproduction of a coloured miniature from a late seventeenth-century German manuscript
Dritter Pitagorischer Sinodas von der verborgenen Weisheit.

M. Paul Chacornac's collection

Witchcraft Magic and Alchemy

BOOK I

SORCERERS

I

THE WORLD OF SHADOWS AS RIVAL OF THE WORLD OF LIGHT

IN the days before the period of scepticism which dawned brutally upon Europe about the beginning of the eighteenth century the history of the private life of all peoples is dominated by their awe of the invisible world and their irrepressible inclination to adventure in it.

The various religious systems of antiquity peopled the spaces of air with creatures which they did not hesitate to define with much precision, although ordinary mortals had not the enviable privilege of seeing them. In these mythologies and theogonies of varying ingenuity mankind had found it agreeable to seek the solution of all the disturbing questions which elude, and perhaps will for ever elude, exact mathematical demonstration. Such are the mystery of human destiny, the problems of chance and of fate, and the knowledge of the future—matters, all of them, which by the wisest were left in the lordship of an Infinite and Supreme Being, while the most daring desired to reduce them to a true science accessible to mortals, in spite of their weakness and limited intelligence.

In brief, the riddles of the whole universe, of the Cosmos and all its parts, and of this globe upon which man lives without knowing whence he derives his origin, were all explained as yet, in default of any analytic or experimental science, by the intervention of the powers of that other mysterious world in which one could hardly adventure but with dread and shuddering.

The problem of the origin of evil, which haunted the minds of Mani, St Augustine, Spinoza, Pascal, and Leibnitz, and was left unsolved by them, had been boldly determined in the ancient doctrine of the Persians at a time certainly earlier than the mythical Zarathustra. The enunciators of this doctrine had without misgiving stated the problem as a terrible equation of which one term was positive, the other negative. These terms were Good and Evil; two principles equal, opposite,

co-eternal, holding between them the world in balance and imposing upon it a law of pitiless compensation.

It is clear that, among other peoples, the Jews, frightened perhaps by the importance given in this doctrine to the principle of Evil, strove to restrict it. As a consequence the Satan of the Scriptures is not co-eternal with God, and whatever may be his power, he is still no more than a mere creature, forced to acknowledge, when it comes to the issue, the omnipotence of his Creator. As I shall show later, this restriction was carried much further by the Christians, who had borrowed the foundations of their own doctrine from the Jews. They held that the Devil is obliged to become the servitor of man whenever certain formulas are employed, but with freedom to wreak an appalling vengeance afterward the moment that earthly life is ended.

With other peoples of antiquity immaterial, invisible, or spiritual beings are not so precisely distinguished. In the Egyptian, Grecian, and, above all, the Roman theogonies it is not always easily discernible whether the 'spirits' to which men appeal for help or success in their enterprises are good or evil, and Iamblichus and Porphyry exhibit a diverting confusion between angels and demons, good and evil spirits, *eudaimons* and *kakodaimons*.

These uncertainties and perplexities notwithstanding, every period of history has produced minds curious to cross the threshold of the invisible world and to thrust ajar the door of the infernal regions, and there is a distinct attraction in studying precisely and objectively the processes employed by these adventurers to help them in their perilous quest, processes scarcely known to us now except by report and in the light of various fantastic and mistaken legends.

This study should be pursued through the medium, above all, of the graphic and glyptic arts. We possess, indeed, numerous and prolix texts, but despite this prolixity, or perhaps because of it, they leave so strong an impression of the vague and unexplained in the mind of the reader that he is apt to eke out their shortcomings by giving his imagination free rein to ramble at large in the domain of fantasy. The iconographic document, on the contrary, settles everything on its natural plane, and possesses a power of sharpened presentment and a scenic value which remedy this defect by darting a flashlight into the sombre chasms of history. I prefer it to descriptive narration, however skilful this may be, and I have therefore not hesitated to reproduce any plastic representation of occult activities which I have been able to find, rather than launch out into doctrines and theories, very few of which will be found in this book.

I shall make little attempt to give an account of what is known concerning the practice of these dark sciences in antiquity: a whole volume would scarcely suffice

for this. Some manifestation of the supernatural world would be found in almost every line left us by the historians, philosophers, and poets, and if I wished to investigate the monuments of the symbolic embodiment known as esoterism I should have to reproduce practically the whole mass of Greek and Egyptian statuary, cuneiform bricks, hieroglyphic papyri, steles, and ostracistic tablets.

From the sublimest heights of philosophy down to the most bizarre practices of necromancy, and in Rome just as in Alexandria, the trace of occult traditions is everywhere encountered. There is no counting those connected with the supernatural, from the noble and majestic figure of Apollonius of Tyana to the witches, Canidia and Sagana, whom Horace shows us carrying on their work in the cemeteries:

> Vidi egomet nigra succinctam vadere palla
> Canidiam, pedibus nudis, passoque capillo
> Cum Sagana majore ululantem.[1]
>
> *Satira*, Lib. I, VIII, v, 23

Divination in its diversity of forms and the evocation of the dead were an integral part of the cult among all peoples. In Rome the haruspices jostled the Vestals, and both were State officials. With them mingled the rabble of magicians of the baser sort, whose practices are too little known for us to attempt their reconstruction with any exactitude.

The magician Circe is the mythological type of the witch, but even with attentive reading of what Homer has said about her we can only form barren conjectures upon the methods she probably employed. She is too remote to have had any influence upon our Western civilization, and the witches of the Middle Ages can claim descent from the Biblical Witch of Endor much more truly than from her.

Decidedly more curious and understandable is the strange and horrible hag in the *Satyricon* of Petronius, where she is shown to us (caput cxxxi) immersed in the operation of restoring virility—a practice common to all peoples; but here again investigation would only leave us faced with methods, customs, and formulas which have left no trace among us, since they derive from different theogonic origins, and which we should find it difficult to illustrate with any vivid iconographic commentary.

For the same reason I shall leave unexplored the limitless field offered by the exotic beliefs of Asia, India, Africa, and the ancient peoples of America, in which the relations of man with the invisible have given birth to innumerable formulas put into practice in veritable schools of sorcerers, diviners, healers, and fakirs. Neither shall I discuss the shamans of Northern and Eastern Siberia, the Tibetan sorcerers, the enchanters of Alaska and Arizona, the diviners who work their trade among the

[1] "With my own eyes I saw Canidia, black-cloaked, barefoot, wild-haired, go howling with the older Sagana."

Indians of Utah, the repulsive Touareg harpies of Timbuktu, nor those found even as far as Lagos in Equatorial Africa. I shall neglect also the sorcerers of the Arunta tribes of Australia, of the Igorrotes in the Philippine Islands, and those of Borneo and Papua.

For the fruitful study of all these varied magics I should have to go back to their actual origins, which in effect would mean expounding theological systems entirely unrelated to the prevalent Christianity of Europe. This immense labour belongs to the domain of pure learning, and would add nothing to our understanding of those traditions of the occult which, after having influenced the strong propensity for the mysterious shown by the Middle Ages, have been in part absorbed by some of our analytic sciences.

I intend to confine investigation to this particular current of tradition, which may be distinguished as the European current. Even so, the field is so vast that we can scarcely hope to traverse it completely, and I shall be compelled often, though regretfully, to omit or deal sparingly with many subjects well deserving a more extended treatment.

II

SACERDOTAL REPRESENTATIONS OF THE DARK WORLD

IT is no matter for wonder or indignation to see, during the whole time that Catholicism had the spiritual direction of Europe, a veritable Church of Evil opposed to the Church of Good, a Church of the Devil defying the Church of God, and possessing, like the latter, its priests, its rites, its cult, its books, its congregations, and its supernatural visitants.

This opposition of two conflicting powers, a relic of Mazdaism and of the doctrine of Mani, was perfectly logical.

The Church propounded the existence of the Devil not in derision or as a jest, but as an article of faith, and as the illiterate mass of the populace could not go to the theological books, which were restricted to the learned, for the details necessary to an exact idea of the Prince of Darkness, his effigy was profusely reproduced, for the benefit of the crowd, in the tympana of cathedral doorways, the stained-glass windows of churches, the bas-reliefs of the periphery of choirs, and among the tiers of gargoyles and waterspouts. These last, beside, swarmed with a whole fantastic fauna representing the presumed forms of the inhabitants and rulers of Hell.

The sight of these representations acted powerfully upon the popular imagination, and nobody doubted the real existence of the Rival of God, attested as it was by the very clergy.

In the period of Pointed Gothic, down to the fourteenth century, the Last Judgment is the customary theme chosen by sculptors, probably in agreement with the clergy, for the decoration of church façades. These scenes always contain a certain number of demons, in the representation of which the artists gave their overflowing imagination free rein.

One of the most ancient pieces of sculpture of this kind is that of eleventh-century date ornamenting the tympanum of the western façade of Autun Cathedral (Fig. 2). For all its archaic workmanship and clumsiness of execution, it has great beauties, and some among the angels and the blessed have countenances of an astonishing perfection.

This tympanum is divided into three superimposed stages. In the lowest stage the awakened dead are filing to the Judgment; the expressiveness of the attitudes and faces is remarkable. Toward the right-hand side of the composition they are

seized by two gigantic hands, which grip their heads in the manner of a vice and hoist them to the upper stage, where the Judgment is taking place.

A balance is suspended from the celestial vault. The soul of the defunct is placed in one of the scales, upon which an angel bears with all his strength. There are five demons of a uniform and almost conventionalized ugliness. One of them strives to weigh the balance down on his side by pulling on the beam with one hand while with the other he holds a damned soul by the scruff of the neck, as one would pick up a kitten. Another dwarfish demon has installed himself without more ado in the scale itself; a third, holding an enormous toad in his hands, seems to be watching the operation in fury. Behind these a demon in a rather improbable position is plunging some of the damned into a vat, while a fifth, leaning half-way out of a monstrous dragon-throat, is lifting up with both hands others who were perhaps already beginning to think, poor souls, that they might escape eternal torment.

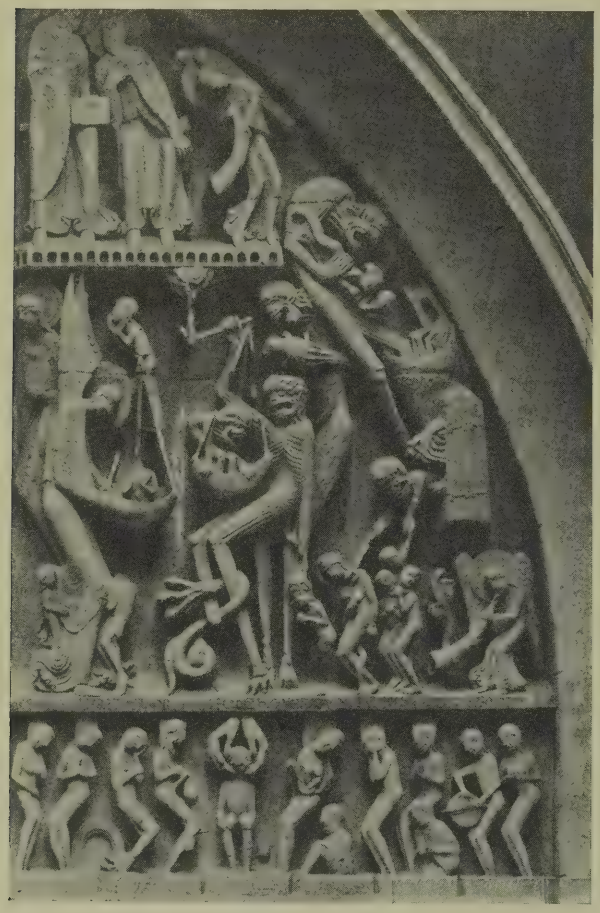


Fig. 2. The Last Judgment
Doorway of Autun Cathedral (eleventh century).

It is apparent that the sculptor, who by a certain perfection in the nude figures shows an undeniable knowledge of anatomy, has reserved the most marked errors of proportion for the demons. They are lank and emaciated, their legs and trunks are fluted like Roman columns, and the convulsive grin of their mouths is not without a sinister effect which puts the finishing touch to the terrible impressiveness of the Eternal Judge, Who sits in His glory, dominating the whole scene.

The imagination of the artist, however, is not very fertile, and a kind of Byzantine dryness prevails throughout this composition, as it does in one on the tympanum of the Abbey of Souillac (Fig. 3), in which we find the same type of devil. I shall have occasion to refer to this composition later.

Much more rich and varied is the scene from the tympanum of Bourges Cathedral illustrating the same theme. Here we have no longer any trace of hieratic Byzan-

tinism. An angel with a beautiful spread of wings holds in his right hand the Balance of the Judgment, which a little bat-eared demon seated in one of the scales fails to weigh down on his own side (Fig. 4). With his other hand the angel is tenderly holding the head of a lovely child, naked and smiling, who has no fear whatever of being damned, since he sees that the balance weighing his soul is heavily tilted on the side of good actions. A demon who stands by, watchful for his prey, is very different from those of Autun. By his sarcastic and mocking grin he is the immediate ancestor of Mephistopheles. He is the exact devil of the sorcerers and the pacts, who will later on lord it at the Sabbath and play scandalous tricks on the nuns of Loudun. He conforms even more to the ancient tradition of the Desert Fathers, for he has the horns and hooked nose of the demon who, by what St Anthony says, tempted St Paul, the hermit.

Fig. 3. The Miracle of Theophilus
Tympanum of the church at Souillac (twelfth century).

The seven other devils in the scene have characteristics different from these. They display the anatomical and pathological deformities which are henceforth to be the essential attributes of demons. Two among them have a supplementary face, bulging like a full moon, on the belly; another has a winged rump and two female breasts terminating in dogs' heads on his chest.

At one side of the scene is the infernal boiling-vat, of a vivid, fantastic realism. A monstrous figure lying on its back constitutes the furnace. The enormous gape of its mouth, showing only one jaw, pours out flames. Two demons, their faces those of scoundrelly, truculent drunkards, are blowing the flames to a fiercer blaze with bellows. This is the famous Throat of Hell, the Gulf of the Pit, the chasm of burning sulphur and pitch which will never go out through all eternity.

The damned are cooking in a vast cauldron above the furnace, and, as overplus of torment, repulsive animals are gnawing at them. A demon whose face is hidden

pitches them in brutally, while another is vigorously pounding them down with a long-handled instrument. The influence of certain parts of medieval literature is evident enough in the terrifying realism with which this scene is treated. The visions of St Salvius and of the Abbot Sunniulphus, reported by Gregory of Tours, and that of the twelfth-century Monk of Evesham so terribly described by the Benedictine chronicler, Matthew Paris, are among the instances that occur to one. When one remembers that the existing specimens of medieval sculpture, however numerous they may be, can hardly be regarded as more than the remnants of the incalculable

Fig. 4. The Last Judgment
Tympanum of the doorway of Bourges Cathedral (thirteenth century).

number destroyed through such causes as vandalism and the alteration or demolition of buildings, it is easily apparent that the scene of the Last Judgment must have been repeated on every church of any importance throughout Christendom. Those which still exist display ingenious variations due to the greater or lesser imaginative fertility of the different artists, and all are calculated to produce an effect of terror on the mind of the population.

On the tympanum of the Benedictine abbey-church of Conques, in Aveyron, there is a demon brandishing a sort of tremendous pestle, with which he is smiting the damned. On the portal of Bamberg Cathedral, in Bavaria, another demon is tugging a lost soul along by a chain. A shudder of horror must have thrilled those who saw all these things in their first freshness without seeing, as we do, the simple-mindedness of their execution. One exact and inexorable conviction must have been forced upon them—that they must one day suffer such agonies in their turn.

Cheek by jowl with theology, the science of God, demonology, the science of God's hideous rival, the Devil, was written up over the very portals of the churches

which housed the Throne of Truth. There was small room here for doubting the existence of all that obscure and invisible world where the devilish host was arrayed against the angelic. It is true enough that the theologians discoursed much more upon the nature of God, His goodness and infinite virtues, than upon the Devil. Him they left, voluntarily or not, in a kind of nebulous state, but the effect of this was merely to excite popular curiosity still more.

When the Cathedral Age closes and decadent religious sculpture seeks fresh inspiration at pagan sources Christian art turns to other more intimate forms, such as the miniature paintings in manuscripts or the wood-engravings of incunabula. The practice of infernal representation, however, passes on into these new arts, and continues to exercise the same influence on the human mind. The celebrated diabolic frescoes in the Campo Santo at Pisa continue the tradition of past centuries, easily improving, through the greater facility of their artistic medium, upon the audacious creations of the sculptors.

Various illuminations in the manuscripts of the Middle Ages had already transported into books the traditional scene of the cathedral tympanum. Henceforth it was to be presented afresh by the burin of the engraver and amplified with unprecedented details, which could be varied to an infinite extent, owing to the flexibility of execution inherent in this method.

A German incunabulum by Jacobus de Teramo printed at Augsburg in 1473, entitled *Hie hebt sich an das Buch Belial genant* and popularly known as *Das Buch Belial*, contains a wood-engraving representing the mouth of Hell (Fig. 5) which yields in no respect to the most terrifying sculptural compositions of the thirteenth century. The jaw of the dragon is here propped open by a strong wooden post. On each side of the mouth is a demon, one frowning terribly, the other splitting his face in a boon-companion sort of grin, sinister enough in itself, but all the more sinister on such a face. Another demon shows a vicious head in the background, while their chief, Belial, standing before the abyss, holds a mysterious consultation with them.

It is true that the sixteenth-century painters, such as Michelangelo and Jean Cousin, softened the crudity of the details and suppressed all the fantastic elements in their interpretation of the Last Judgment, which they adapted to the needs of a period already invaded by scepticism ; but the engravers, especially the Flemings and the Hollanders, let their temperament run riot and abandoned themselves to a veritable debauch of imagination in which a grain of ingenuousness and a far stronger flavour of irreverence are plainly perceptible.

There is an interpretation by Lucas Cranach the Elder (1472–1553). This very little known wood-engraving shows the scene where, at the conclusion of the Judgment, the damned are hurled into Hell (Fig. 6). The hedgehog-demon on the

right of the composition, the horrible griffin with a skeleton tapir's head wearing a cotton cap, the winged pig who tortures a lying priest, and the monster who is ravishing a woman and thrusting a keen, metallic tongue into her mouth are creations which we shall often find again among the sixteenth-century engravers.

Another print, by the Flemish master, Breughel the Elder, engraved in 1558 by Cock, under a general aspect of severity conceals the most hilarious details (Fig. 7). The arrangement of this picture of the Judgment is the same as in the cathedral

Fig. 5. The Mouth of Hell
Jacobus de Teramo, *Das Buch Belial* (Augsburg, 1473).

sculptures. The Son of Man, seated on clouds, pronounces the fatal words, "Venite, benedicti Patris mei, in Regnum aeternum ; ite, maledicti Patris mei, in ignem sempiternum."[1] The enormous Throat of Hell occupies the right of the composition; it is that of a fish of colossal dimensions in which the torrent of damned is swallowed up. The demons who drive the damned onward have no longer the caricature of human shape usual in earlier centuries : they have assumed the drollest forms—birds of prey, reptiles, improbable-looking batrachians, gnomes with flattened beaks or monstrous mandibles—which might have been derived from palæontology, if that science had then existed, or from some prehistoric fauna.

The same characteristics are found again in an engraving (Fig. 8) by Hieronymus

[1] "Come, ye blessed of my Father, into the Eternal Kingdom : go, ye accursed of my Father, into everlasting fire."

Fig. 6. The Torments of the Damned
Lucas Cranach the Elder (1472–1553).

Fig. 7. The Last Judgment
Breughel the Elder (1558).

Bosch (1460–1518), the celebrated Dutch engraver ; but here the anxiety to be fantastic is carried to a point where it is extravagant and exasperating. The immense expanse of this picture is all astir with movement and animation, with a morbid and tumultuous life ; it is a hurly-burly of nameless maleficent beings assuming indecent and contorted postures. It recalls the Sabbath, crowning achievement of the demoniac.

Fig. 8. The Last Judgment
Hieronymus Bosch (1460–1518).

A scene in some degree analogous to the Last Judgment is that of Christ's descent into Hell. It had been very little treated in earlier centuries, but the sixteenth-century engravers took to it readily, and it certainly provided an easy excuse for demoniac fantasies. A splendid German engraving by Martin Schongauer (Fig. 10) shows us Christ beating down a demon, while two others are striving to prevent the just whom the Saviour has set free from coming out of Limbo. These three guardians of Hell have the countenances of birds of prey, so complicated with tentacles and thorny spikes that the whole effect is like the back of a sea-horse or the headpiece of a Bergamask suit of armour.

Breughel too treats this scene with his usual liveliness (Fig. 9). The magnanimous figure of Christ is shown in a central medallion delivering a crowd of the just, who are pouring out of Limbo. He is undisturbed by a perfect fauna of grotesque infernal creatures surrounding Him. One of them is an indescribable being wearing a visored morion on its head; its body is half cockchafer, half egg; and the

Fig. 9. The Just delivered from Limbo
Breughel the Elder (sixteenth century).

shell is partly opening to let out a batch of released children. Another has pushed an arm, as if it were a seton, through the skin of its own back, and is brandishing a sword in the hand belonging to the arm. Certain fakirs, it may be noted, are notorious for the performance of the same complicated and unlikely operation.

I should not omit to mention one theme of these diabolic representations which has spread its variations profusely over Christian iconography; this is the Archangel Michael crushing Lucifer. This episode is not Biblical, but is linked up with the most obscure profundities of theology. The fallen angel, identified with the Satan of the Old Testament, is generally represented under the form of a dragon, in which

he had figured during four centuries in the stained-glass windows of cathedrals. This is the shape he takes in Martin Schongauer's beautiful print (Fig. 11), which may be considered as a replica to some extent of Fig. 10. Christ and the Archangel have the same attitude and the same gesture of power, and the same dragon writhes at the feet of the divine conqueror.

Fig. 10. The Descent of Jesus into Hell
Martin Schongauer (1420–88).

Fig. 11. St Michael trampling on the Dragon
Martin Schongauer (1420–88).

Toward the end of the Middle Ages the subject of the Individual Judgment, rarely found in the cathedral sculptures, begins to occupy a position of much importance and tends to supplant that of the general Last Judgment almost completely. A very commonly treated version of this subject is that of angels and demons struggling for the soul of a dying mortal.

The excellent composition which is reproduced in Fig. 12 is taken from a very rare incunabulum, the *Ars moriendi*, published at Augsburg about 1470 or 1471. A monk is handing the dying man a lighted candle, while the choir of angels receives his soul in the form of a little naked personage; on the right is the scene of the Crucifixion, to show that the dying man shares in the benefits of the Saviour's cross.

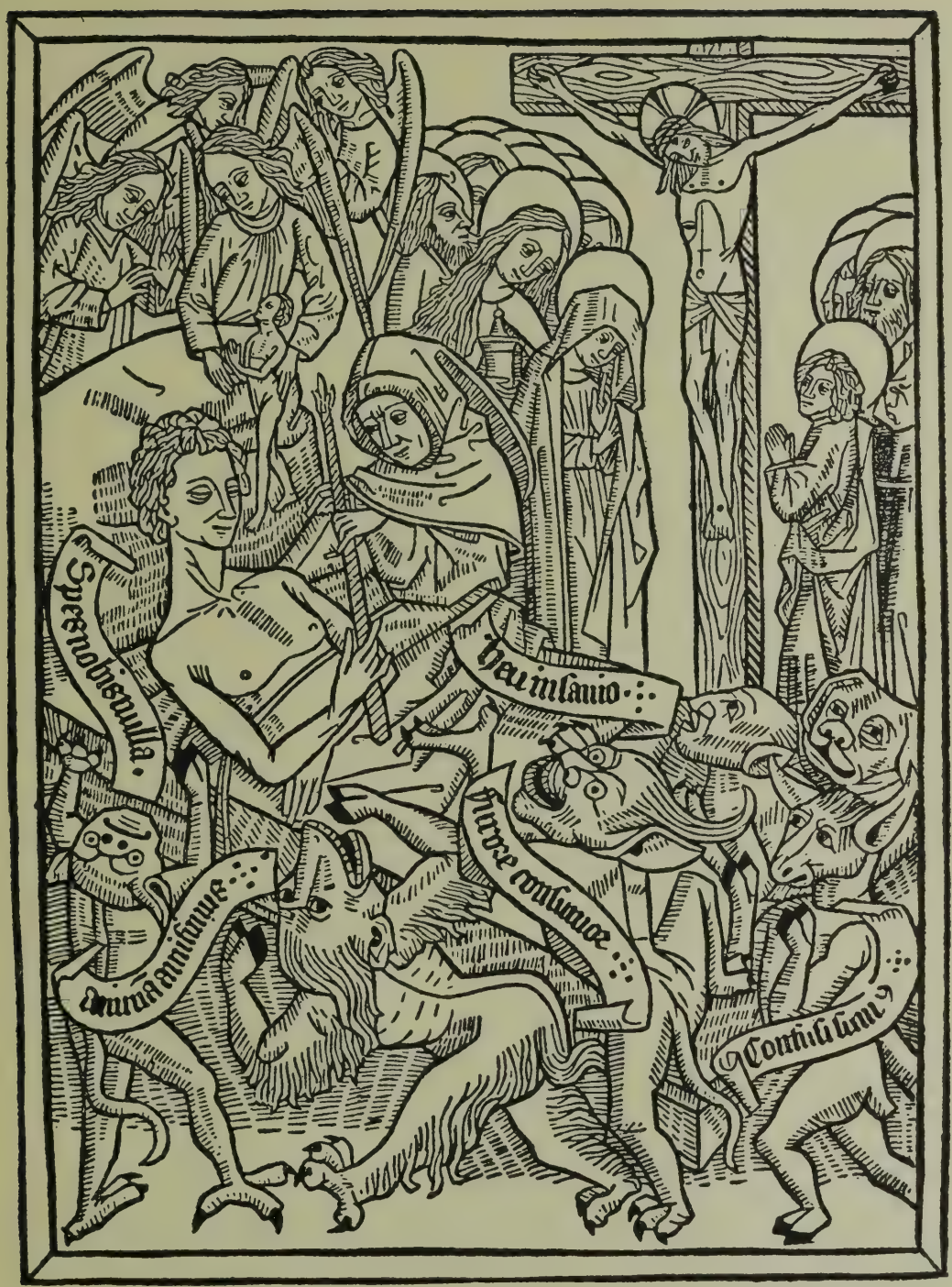


Fig. 12. Demons and Angels contending for the Soul of a Dying Man
Ars moriendi (Augsburg, *c.* 1471).
Author's collection.

But there again, at the foot of the bed, we find once more our undefeated demons of the cathedral tympanum in various grotesque and terrible shapes. One of them has the head of a mad dog ; another that of an ass forlornly braying ; a third, at the foot of the cross, is a caricature of the Jewish type. Two others are standing in contorted attitudes on three-clawed hind feet like those of a cock and waving the cloven goat-hooves of their forelegs ; these two have spectacles on their noses. The whole group forms a clamouring chorus of rage and despair at seeing the soul escape them ; their cries are inscribed on the scrolls : " Heu insanio," " Spes nobis nulla," " Animam amisimus," " Furore consumor," " Confusi sumus."[1]

We should mention in passing, among the exhibitions of diabolism which had a powerful effect on the popular mind, the mystery and miracle plays acted by the Confraternity of the Passion and other theatrical societies all through the Middle Ages. These naive pieces always allowed of a Hell where innumerable scenes of devilry revealed themselves to the spectators, who accorded them a theological value almost equal to that of holy books.

Dante's great *Commedia* influenced Europe considerably from about the end of the thirteenth century onward, and further contributed to establish the notion of Hell and to class it among the incontestable religious verities. This more modern and more philosophic Hell, however, with its circles of the damned and its special symbolism, is precisely enough distinguished from the earlier traditional Hell for us to be able to assert that it inspired but slightly the immense impulse of sorcery which is the subject of this study. I need not, therefore, outline the special Dantesque iconography, which was, in any case, developed much later and remained to some extent distinct from the diabolic iconography of general Christian origin. There is perhaps a trace of the latter in the innermost circle of Dante's Hell, where the poet, imagining a supreme punishment for Judas Iscariot, the supreme criminal of humanity, shows him chewed eternally in the teeth of Satan himself :

> " È Giuda Scariotto,
> Che'l capa ha dentro e fuor le gambe mena."[2]
>
> *Inferno*, Canto XXXIV

The powerful wood-engraving reproduced in Fig. 13 is from a quarto *Opere del divino poeta Danthe*. Following the poem, Satan is shown with a triple face, the central mouth devouring Judas and the lateral mouths Brutus and Cassius.

At a period nearer our own, no longer animated by the ardent faith of the Middle Ages, and in backward countries little concerned with the subtle niceties of civilization, the Church still displayed the Devil to the crowd in a shape brought

[1] " Ah, woe ! I am mad ! " " No hope for us ! " " We have lost the soul ! " " I am devoured by frenzy ! " " We are confounded ! "

[2] " ' That is Judas Iscariot, his head within and his legs writhing without.' "

down to an entirely popular level and helped out by mechanical contrivances so as to produce a childish illusion.

We have an example of this in the curious piece of sacristy furniture preserved in the Musée de Cluny at Paris (Fig. 14). It is probably a specimen of Calabrian art executed about the beginning of the seventeenth century. This has been supposed to represent the Wicked Thief, but it is quite certain that this black figure, with a horrible, distorted face and protruding an enormous red tongue, is an actual demon. He appears at a window fitted into the apparatus, constructed in the manner found in the modern puppet-show. An ingenious system of cords, pulleys, springs, and counter-weights—still working—allowed the monstrous figure to appear at will, in order to terrorize any hardened, rebellious sinner who refused to confess his faults.

Fig. 13. The Punishment of Judas Iscariot
Opere del divino poeta Danthe (Venice, Bernardino Stagnino, 1512).

Having arrived at a period of imagery of purely popular appeal, we find numberless iconographic documents designed to produce the same effect of mental terror as the cathedral sculptures had produced formerly. The art of these later documents is by many degrees inferior, but spiritual barrenness and the changes of time must be blamed for that; the intention of the artists—still with a touch of the naive about it—remains the same.

As a sample of the productions of this period it will suffice to reproduce three engravings taken from a German album of the eighteenth century entitled *Vierzig Kupferstiche für die Katholische Normalschule der Taubstummen*, by Romedius Knoll, a priest (Augsburg, Nicholaus Doll) (see plate facing p. 38 and Fig. 15). The first of these represents the Good Confession. A penitent is entering at the right of the scene, led enchained by a horned demon clothed in a sort of negro's

loincloth. A female penitent acknowledges her faults in the confessional, and the Grace of the Merits of Christ is poured down by Him, breaking the chains by which another demon was holding her. A third penitent led by his guardian angel is departing at the right of the confessional, while another angel brings him a crown from Heaven. Two medallions in the upper corners show the Prodigal Son in his sin and in the reconciliation with his father.

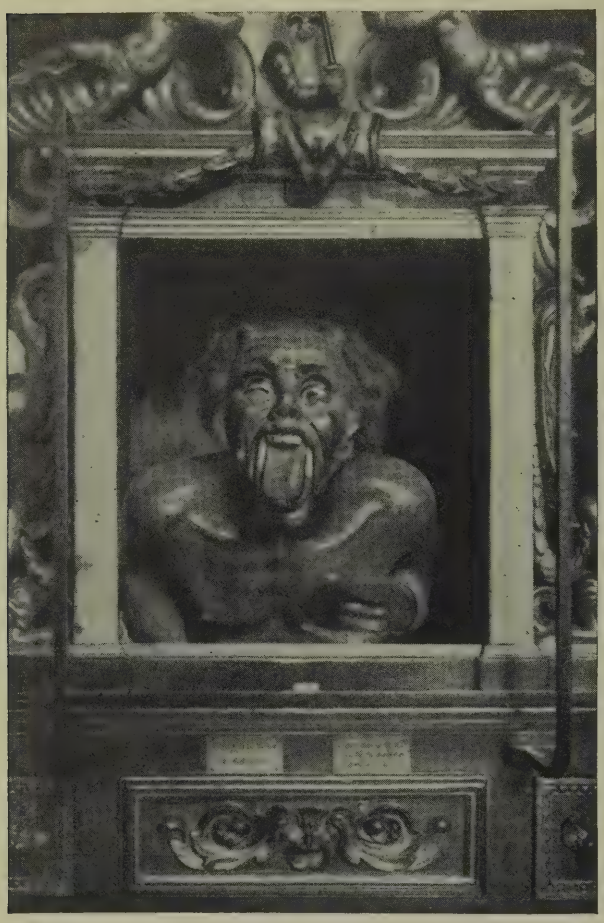
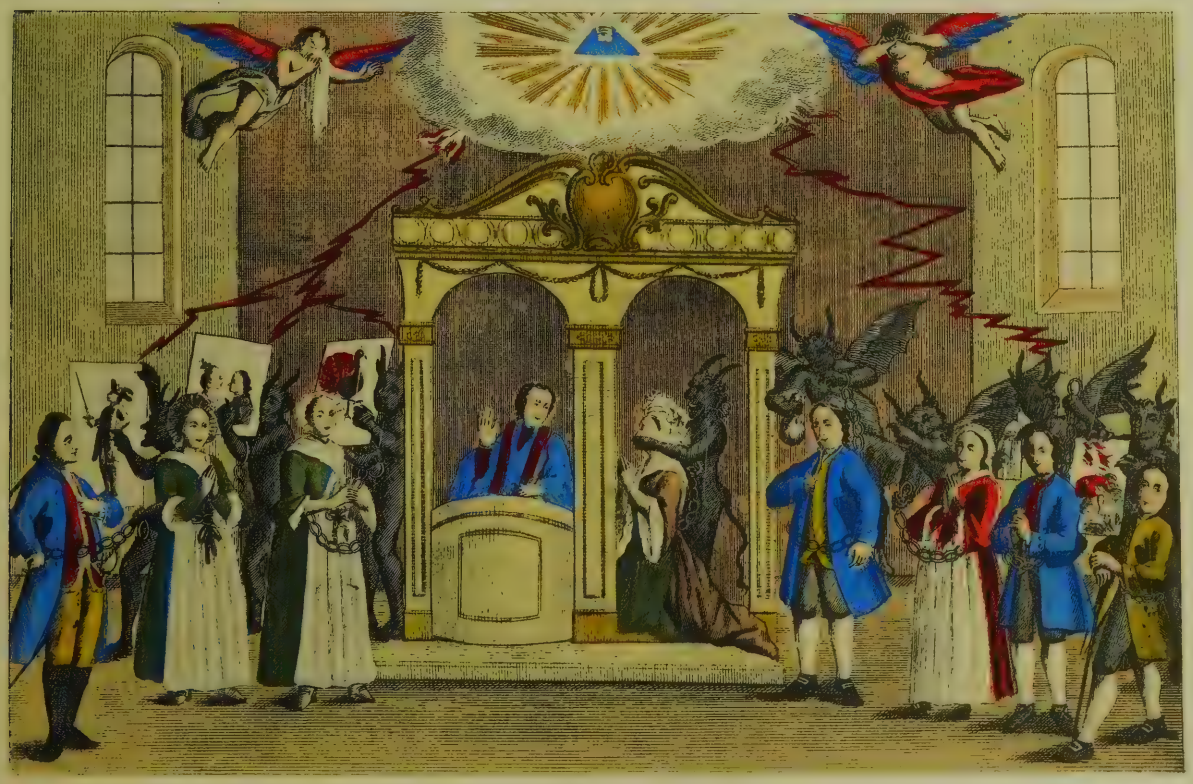


Fig. 14. The Apparition of the Devil
Calabrian sacristy furniture (seventeenth century).
Musée de Cluny.

The second design forms a pendant to the first; it represents the Bad Confession. A demon with an evil grin has impudently taken his stand in the confessional, and closes the mouth of a female sinner who is concealing her sins. To right and left seven demons are leading seven chained male and female sinners, who have apparently committed the seven deadly sins, judging from the pictures carried by the seven demons. These pictures show Anger, typified by a man brandishing a sword; Pride, a peacock displaying its tail; Lust, an amorous colloquy; and Sloth, a sleeping man. Two of the demons are holding out to their victims a bag of coins and a flagon, which symbolize Avarice and Drunkenness, while Envy is excited by the demon who shows the bag of coins.

The third plate shows Hell and the torments inflicted on the damned (Fig. 15). These are seen, properly chained and padlocked, hanging in the fire, or impaled on the sharp teeth of a gigantic wheel, or being brutally turned over and over with spiked instruments in the flames which are to roast them for all eternity. Although their rudimentary method of execution places such works far below those of Cranach, Breughel, Callot, or Schongauer, they perhaps did more than the latter, in reducing it to an everyday shape, to preserve among the people a tradition which had been attacked by the weapons of philosophy, but which the theologians had striven to maintain in its complete integrity.



THE GOOD CONFESSION AND THE BAD CONFESSION

Romedius Knoll, *Vierzig Kupferstiche* (Augsburg, eighteenth century).

Maître Maurice Garçon's collection

This last composition and others of the sort may well have been inspired by a little popular book by the Abbé François Arnoux, Canon of Riez, published at Rouen in 1622 and entitled *Merveilles de l'autre monde*, which describes Hell in a style worthy of Romedius Knoll :

> In Hell the devils scream one to another ; wound, flay, butcher, slaughter, murder without let or stay ; thrust swiftly such a one upon the live coals, hurl such another into

Fig. 15. Hell
Knoll's *Vierzig Kupferstiche* (eighteenth century).
Collection of Maître Maurice Garçon.

> the furnaces or the boiling cauldrons. And the light women, these shall have in their arms a dragon most cruel, flaming with fire, or, if thou wilt, a devil in form of dragon who shall bind and enchain their feet and their legs with his serpent tail and shall clasp their whole body with his cruel talons, who shall put his beslabbered and reeking mouth upon theirs, breathing therein flames of fire and sulphur and poison and venom, who with his nose, glandered and hideous, shall breathe into theirs a breath most stinking and venomous. And, to come to an end, this dragon shall make them suffer a thousand agonies, a thousand colics and bitter twistings of the belly, and all the damned shall howl, and the devils with them : " See the wanton ! see the strumpet ! Let her be tortured indeed ! To it, to it, ye devils ! to it, ye demons ! to it, ye hellish furies ! See the harlot ! see the trull ! hurl ye upon this whore and wreak upon her all the torments ye can ! "

III

DIABOLIC MANIFESTATIONS IN THE RELIGIOUS LIFE

THE faithful of the Church held it sure that the Deity could, on certain occasions, manifest Himself to mankind visibly in various forms, including the human. This was balanced by the equally logical assurance that the Devil could appear in the same manner. The inferior devils, his satellites, also had this power of rendering themselves visible, as well as the angels, the satellites of God. The interminable chapters of his *Summa Theologica* devoted by St Thomas Aquinas to angels and devils, and to the way in which they are able to take human shape, enable us to understand without anything further that no doubt was then permitted on this point.

Apparitions of the Devil are mentioned on almost every page of the historians and chroniclers of the Middle Ages. Certain authors would even seem to have laid upon themselves the task of collecting nothing but stories of this sort ; as instances of such authors I may cite Thomas of Cantinpré, Cæsarius of Heisterbach, Peter the Venerable, in his two books of *Miracles*, and the compiler of the *Dialogues* of St Gregory the Great—the admired dialogues, so dear to the Benedictines, which were read before compline in some churches and nearly became a part of the liturgy.

Who, besides, would at all have dared to doubt those renowned diabolical apparitions of which St Anthony had been the hapless victim in his desert, and which that grave and solemn Father of the Church, St Athanasius, has told in minute detail ?

Long before Flaubert culled the materials for his dazzling, though laborious, romance from it this celebrated narrative had formed a staple of conversation during the Middle Ages, in the cloister, in the great halls of manors, and in the villein's cottage. It inspired every artist who had already depicted the Last Judgment and who wanted to do a Temptation of St Anthony by way of getting his hand in for a representation of the terrible and forbidden subject of the Sabbath.

The most remarkable work of this kind is perhaps that by Israel van Meckenem, a German engraver of the fifteenth century, far too little known, who seems to surpass all his contemporaries in the nobility of his inspiration and the perfection of his workmanship. St Anthony is shown lifted into the air by demons (Fig. 16). The artist has borrowed the most grotesque and alarming anatomical peculiarities to be found in such animal forms as the oxyrhync, the decapods, and the cirripedes and built these demons out of them. There are fantastic holothurians with

Fig. 16. The Temptation of St Anthony
Israel van Meckenem (fifteenth century).

grimacing heads, mictyres with multiple claws, king-crabs flourishing a sharp sting. A rabid-featured monkey, armed with a cudgel, is beating the Saint on the head with all his might. Other monsters are clinging to his robe. These have outspread fins, bristling spikes like those of the spondylus or the branchiopods, and the pointed crests of the dactylopters, the trigla, the flying hog-fish, or crab-beetles, along their

Fig. 17. The Temptation of St Anthony
Breughel the Elder, engraved by Cock (1556).

spines. As for the pious hermit, he has the wink and bantering smile of a shrewd old fellow who has seen plenty of such creatures before and knows that there is nothing very disturbing about all this phantasmagoria once you begin to get used to it.

The artists of the sixteenth century undoubtedly give an effect of richer profusion, and delight in a greater multiplicity of detail in treating this subject, as we see in a strange print by Breughel the Elder engraved by Cock (Fig. 17), but they never surpassed Israel van Meckenem in concentrated power or skill in composition.

Callot in his *Great Temptation*, an immense print divided into two parts (Fig. 21), gives the adventure of the Saint an unusual amplitude by his profusion of personages, every one of which would merit a special study ; nevertheless, in his better-known *Little Temptation* (Fig. 18) he reduces the scene to juster proportions, and while employing the method of Breughel he shows a sense of congruity, harmony, and balance of masses not possessed by the old Dutch master. The science of diabolism

Fig. 18. The Temptation of St Anthony (known as the "Little Temptation")
Callot (seventeenth century).

is here carried to its highest point. The picture became celebrated during the actual lifetime of the artist, and is too well known to need any discussion of its details. We should remark that it did much to prepare the way for the scene of the Sabbath, which it resembles in more than one point.

The Temptation of St Anthony was treated several times by Teniers. It would be surprising if this were not so, for he knew all the subjects which offered anything in the way of the mysterious or picturesque and handled them with a subtle touch of mockery and scepticism. The print shown in Fig. 19 was engraved by Le Bas after a picture by Teniers now in the Musée at Lille. It is one of the best *Temptations* by this

artist, although not well known. It is distinguished from earlier representations by the richly dressed woman in the foreground, who is offering the Saint a love-philtre. This sensual detail is borrowed from the life of the pious hermit, but had been neglected by artists hitherto. The other woman with horns—probably a disguised

Fig. 19. The Temptation of St Anthony
David Teniers, engraved by Charles Le Bas.

demon—leaning on the shoulder of St Anthony has the characteristic features—the classic features, we might almost venture to say—at that time given to the witch.

Several *Temptations* painted by Teniers, to be found in various European galleries, belong to the type shown in Fig. 20, which is totally different from the one just described. In this beautiful print, engraved by J. F. van den Wyng, we find the apparatus of monsters dear to all the artists who ventured into diabolism, but here they have put on mantles, cowls, and monks' cloaks and hoods in order to deride the Saint under the appearance of hermits like himself. This was a device often resorted to by the Devil in his later days.

The chief part in this scene is filled by the horned witch, whose compressed lips betray the habit of command. She is drawing the Saint's attention to the potful of succulent food which she has set to boil; by this new means of temptation she hopes to defeat the persistent fasts which are disordering the stomach of the good monk.

St Anthony was not the only person tormented by demons in his solitude,

Fig. 20. The Temptation of St Anthony
David Teniers, engraved by Van den Wyng.

although he was the most celebrated. If we wanted to enumerate all such sufferers we should have to cite all the saintly existences from the remotest times down to our own day, beginning with the Desert Fathers and ending with the Curé of Ars, and, supposing we did this, we should find scarcely one who was exempt from diabolic aggression. All these pious personages had bones to pick with their invisible enemies, who sometimes became so unfortunately visible.

Demons occupied a most important place not only in the lives of the famous hermits, St Anthony and St Benedict, but in those—to take a small list selected at random—of St Dominic, St Thomas Aquinas, St Francis of Assisi, St Magdalene of

Pazzi, St Catherine of Siena, St Angela of Foligno, and thousands of others. The accounts of them written by their contemporaries, admirers or confessors, describe how the demons harassed these pure and humble souls. They tore them from their pious meditations, threw them down in their cells, stripped their clothes off, and smeared their faces with filth. Sometimes they flogged them viciously; this happened often to St John of the Cross, the disciple and emulator of St Theresa.

Demons threw St Catherine of Siena into the fire not once, but many times; they made her fall off her horse and threw her head-first into a freezing river. Anne, Reverend Mother in St Bartholomew and coadjutrix of St Theresa, was exposed likewise to the persecutions of demons, who pursued her in the very corridors of her convent and put out her lantern. Sister Mary Angelica, of the Providence of Evreux, whose life was written by the Abbé Boudon, was followed for two years by a demon in the form of a dog with green scales; demons often clutched her by the legs and held her fast where she stood. Sister Margaret of the Holy Sacrament, a Carmelite nun of the convent at Beaune, was overwhelmed with all sorts of demoniac maladies, which were healed at length by the power of the Prior's ritual command; Satan often tried to strangle her.

Fig. 21. The Temptation of St Anthony (known as the "Great Temptation") Callot.

Agnes, a Reverend Mother in Jesus of the Order of St Dominic, was one of those who were tried to utmost extremity by the infernal powers. Demons threw down great logs before her feet in order to crush them; one appeared to her in the shape of an Ethiopian of gigantic stature, jetting fire through his eyes and protruding a flaming tongue a foot long, who furiously blew the fire she was lighting. She was often beset by a packed troop of variously shaped demons; some of them, in the forms of snakes, glided under her skirts and coiled themselves round her legs, and others took the figure of famished wolves, who hurled themselves upon her with gaping jaws. Swarms of evil spirits surrounded her without respite and buried her from head to foot.

Even the Blessed Marguerite Marie, the wondrously privileged being to whom the secrets of the Divine Heart of Jesus were revealed, had to struggle with demons. Bishop Languet, her biographer, reports that sometimes,

> while she was seated with the Sisters before the common fire, an invisible force violently and repeatedly tore from under her the seat upon which she was placed and threw her to the ground several times in succession. In 1715 there were still three Sisters living who saw this and made a judicial deposition to the fact.

To sum up, it is quite evident that the Middle Ages (and, to a certain extent, more

Fig. 22. Antichrist
Lucas Cranach.
Schedel, *Nuremberg Chronicle* (1493).

modern times) were dominated by the idea of diabolical existence as much as by that of the Divine Existence. This is a consideration which must never be lost sight of in studying these distant epochs if it is desired to form a balanced judgment of them. Satan figures in the iconography of the period quite as often as the Saviour, and the existence of the Devil was then just as much an article of faith as the existence of the Most High. The attempt should not be made to separate these two notions, following the ill example of certain schools of historical philosophy which have pronounced the idea of the Deity to be worthy of respect and that of the Devil gross and ridiculous. To adopt such a standpoint is to misapprehend the fundamentals of theology. If the Satanic concept is tampered with, the whole edifice laboriously erected by the Fathers of the Church crumbles to the ground.

It is perhaps desirable, in conclusion, to note the strange and undefined figure of Antichrist, half demon, half human, as shown by Lucas Cranach in Schedel's *Nuremberg Chronicle* (Fig. 22). His existence was an article of faith, and he both corroborates and renders more concrete the antinomy existing between the eternally hostile principles of Good and Evil.

IV

THE SORCERER AS PRIEST OF THE DEMONIACAL CHURCH

IN view of what we have so far concluded it is perfectly logical that certain men, having considered the existence of the two opposed principles, Good and Evil, and having seen that God possessed His rich and honoured Church on earth, His priests, His liturgy, His ceremonies, His Mass, and His books, should have asked themselves—above all, if they believed that they had a right to complain of God, Who had condemned them to a wretched state of life and denied them worldly goods—why Satan, the Spirit of Evil whose terrifying effigy they were sometimes shown, should not have his Church also, his priests, his ceremonies, and his mass. They would question further why they themselves should not be the priests of this demon, who would, perhaps, give them what God did not deign to give, and why they should not offer him their homage, asking him for joy and good fortune in return, since he was said to be the master of temporal riches and transient possessions. The Church affected to present him as a fallen angel, but he might, they would think, be the equal of God in spite of all, since the Book of Job showed him sharing the counsels of the Lord, speaking familiarly with Him and even laying a wager with Him.

The practical application of this logic was inevitable and disastrous. Cathedrals cannot make a display of the Devil through ten centuries to thirty generations of human beings with impunity ; the result of the procedure will be a crop of folk curious to see him in reality, of flatterers anxious to pay him court, and of rebels eager to give themselves up to him, body and soul. Satan had his priests indeed, who were the sorcerers. He had, above all, his priestesses, the witches. The inexorably logical train of reasoning produced this additional consequence—that since men alone were admitted to the service of the Lord, women, who were excluded from it, went over in all the greater number to His obscure rival, who welcomed them from choice. It has been said that there were a thousand witches for one sorcerer, which is a manifest exaggeration, but it is certain that women vastly preponderated over men in the throng which hastened to the adoration of the He-Goat.

It is a witch and not a sorcerer who figures on the right-hand voussoir of the western doorway of Lyons Cathedral. This extremely curious piece dates from the

beginning of the fourteenth century, and is certainly the earliest representation of such a personage on any cathedral. Her presence clearly indicates an implicit recognition by the Church of the reality of sorcery. The Church, in fact, took the matter quite seriously and not at all in the way of a good many modern Christians, who would very much like to be rid of all these awkward traditions and of the Devil at the same time.

Fig. 23. A Witch
Lyons Cathedral, western doorway (fourteenth century).

The witch is naked (Fig. 23), as she will still be found in the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century prints of the Sabbath. She is riding a goat, which she holds by one horn with her right hand, while in her left she is whirling round an animal which we recognize as the classic black cat—found to this day among the cartomancers. In a bas-relief opposite this (Fig. 24) two personages ensconced in a fortified castle are pointing out the witch, from the top of the towers, to a third personage, who is setting two dogs at her and bolting precipitately into the castle by the open door.

Fig. 24. The Fear of Witchcraft
Lyons Cathedral, western doorway (fourteenth century).

This scene indicates very plainly the terror formerly caused by witches in consequence of the magnitude accredited to their powers.

It is almost impossible to give an exact definition of a sorcerer. Their functions being so various, both sorcerers and witches were as various in kind, and sorcerer was a term applied —often abusively—to persons occupying very different places in the social scale and far removed from one another in their degree of culture.

The chief function of the sorcerer—as his name indicates—was to cast a *sors*, or spell, over those to whom, for some reason or another, he wished evil. He invoked the curse of Hell upon them as the priest called down the blessing of Heaven, and on this earth he was in complete rivalry with the ecclesiastical world.

He could also, by recourse to the Devil, obtain emoluments and worldly goods for those who were willing to enter into a pact; these benefits were condemned by the

Church on account of their demoniac origin. Here again the sorcerer was in complete opposition to the priest, who taught, for his part, that worldly goods cannot be obtained without crime except from God and by appealing exclusively to Him, either directly or through the medium of the saints.

Some skilful sorcerers knew the art of calling up the Devil or the subordinate demons of the vast infernal army ; this was an evident superiority over the priest, whom theology forbade to tempt God by asking for a miracle, and who could not consequently produce any beneficent apparition. Other sorcerers, known as necromancers, could call up apparitions of the dead ; this was an operation often confounded with the apparition of demons, although the two were quite different.

We must further note that sorcerer and witch were names given to those who were in reality possessed persons. This is a distinction not very precisely established, even in certain modern works the authors of which have assumed to give a scientific explanation of every diabolistic fact. In addition to this, the manifestations of possession were often intermingled with those of sorcery proper, and were to be found even in that supreme consecration of the sorcerer's varied talents—the masterpiece of the infernal art, as we might call it—the Sabbath. This notorious event was an assembly of the sorcerers and witches of a whole province, presided over by the Devil in person ; we shall discuss it at length in later chapters. Not all sorcerers, however, went to the Sabbath, nor did all perform the dark operations we have just mentioned. Very many confined themselves to the exercise of less maleficent arts : they told fortunes, read the future by the tarot cards, interpreted the lines of the hand, and devoted themselves to divination by any of the innumerable methods of which they so mysteriously transmitted the tradition. This kind of sorcery especially seems to have been practised by the people known as Bohemians or gipsies, and it is a point worth noting that these were wanderers, while the Satanizing sorcerers, in distinction, were attached rather to their villages.

Finally, there were sorcerers whom we should now class as 'intellectuals.' They were called sorcerers because an exact notion of what we mean by 'learned man' did not then exist. The learned man, in those days, was the man of book-learning, who taught from his official station in the universities without departing from the doctrines of the Church and Aristotle. But the man who made up his mind to manipulate matter and wrest its secrets from it in the shadow of a laboratory, or to co-ordinate the first stammerings of experimental science, was still regarded as a variety of sorcerer, and he often deserved the name from his willingness to mix psychic operations with what we should now consider the proper study of natural science.

In the Middle Ages every town of Germany, Hungary, Flanders, and Brabant had

its old man who lived secluded in some mysterious house at the bottom of a blind alley. His wicket-gate was obstinately shut against the curious and intrusive. He was half goldsmith, half antiquary, and passed for extremely rich. Sometimes he had a pretty daughter, who was never seen except at Mass and knew nothing of what her father did. It was suspected that he read the stars and attempted to transmute metals—for the noise of his powerful furnace-bellows was heard at night—and that he made automata (Robots we might call them now), but, as no one knew the exact secret of his activities, it made an easier explanation than anything else to suppose that he had sold his soul to the Devil, so they supposed this and called him a sorcerer. This most popular personage has inspired any number of fantastic tales, such as those by Hoffmann. The famous Doctor Faust is the finest type originating in this convention, and is found again, very much watered down, in Jules Verne's *Maître Zacharius* and the *Coppélia* ballet of Léo Delibes.

There were monks, even, to whom the name of sorcerer was applied ; both Roger Bacon and Albertus Magnus—who became Bishop of Ratisbon, in Bavaria—left the reputation of sorcerers behind them. There were also sorcerer-monarchs like Henri III and his mother, Catherine de Médicis, and, strangest of all, sorcerer-Popes ; St Leo the Great, a famous Pope of the fifth century, Pope Honorius in the seventh century, and Pope Silvester II in the eleventh century, were considered, rightly or wrongly, to be sorcerers, and various magical works which we shall have occasion to mention were attributed to them.

Very numerous in past centuries, village sorcerers have not yet completely disappeared in Europe. They are still quite frequently met with in the Balkan and Yugo-Slav countries. I have spoken to authentic witches in the French villages of Jalogny (Saône-et-Loire), Villemoustaussou (Aude), Saint-Pé (Hautes-Pyrénées), and Plessala (Côtes-du-Nord), and also in a suburb of Huesca, in Spain ; all of them employed the classic methods revealed in the different books of sorcery which have come down to us.

As for the sorcerers of the towns, they are now represented by our cartomancers, cheiromancers, and astrologers. The science of these last underwent a veritable resurrection in the first part of the twentieth century, and at the moment they are numerous in France, Germany, Denmark, England, and, above all, the United States. The alchemist too is still with us, and still claims connexion with analytic and experimental science, which, for its own part, sometimes lets a side-glance linger on the old books, wondering whether the ancients had not some intuition of the most advanced modern theories.

The subject which we are treating is still, then, quite a living one, although its interest seems at first sight retrospective merely. It is only by a detailed study of

every ritual operation of the sorcerers that we can give an exact idea of these picturesque personages, whose predominant characteristic seems to have been an exaggerated unsociable individualism. This characteristic has been too often distorted in biased and sectarian books. The novel crammed with inexactitudes, written in an affected and over-emphatic style and teaching us nothing at all, is an example of this sort of book, and in *La Sorcière* Michelet thought proper to give us an example of this sort of novel, instead of the soundly documented work which the erudition of the author gave us the right to expect from him.

Fig. 25. The Witch
Albrecht Dürer (fifteenth century).

V

THE PREPARATION FOR THE SABBATH

IN general, sorcerers carried on their various malefic operations alone, but they did gather together for the great ceremony of the Sabbath, which, as we have said, was in some sort the diabolistic masterpiece, presided over by Satan in person.

Certain preparations were essential, and the chief were those partial reunions which we might call private Sabbaths. Details of these reunions have been given us by various authors, and the following works may be mentioned : the Révérend Père Crespet, *Deux livres de la hayne de Sathan et malings esperits* (Paris, 1590) ; Jean Wier, *Cinq livres de l'imposture et tromperie des diables* (Paris, 1569) ; Jean Bodin, *De la Démonomanie des sorciers* (Antwerp, 1593) ; Lambert Daneau, *De Veneficis quos olim sortilegos, nunc autem Sortiarios vocant* (Paris, 1574) ; Pierre Le Loyer, *Discours des spectres ou apparitions* (Angers, 1586) ; Henri Boguet, *Discours des sorciers* (Lyons, 1610) ; Pierre de l'Ancre, *L'Incrédulité et mescréance du sortilège* (Paris, 1622) ; the Révérend Père M. Mar. Guaccius, *Compendium maleficarum* (Milan, 1626). Even if all these works were lacking, however, it would be easy to reconstruct what passed at the assemblies of sorcerers from the numerous engravings which the artists of the period took such pains to leave for our benefit.

We may take first the celebrated group of four witches by Albrecht Dürer (Fig. 26). They are completing the stripping off of their clothes in order to go to the Sabbath. One of them is a great lady ; her elaborate headdress stands up in the style of a hennin, and a diaphanous veil comes half-way down her face. The others are peasants ; one of them is crowned with leaves in the pagan manner. In the aperture of a half-opened door—the door of Hell—the Devil laughs with tigerish ferocity, awaiting those who are to be his companions at the Sabbath and later on his fourfold prey.

This same design was engraved by Israel van Meckenem (Fig. 27) and Wenceslas of Olmutz. The print by Israel van Meckenem seems to be of earlier date than that by Dürer, judging by its archaistic ruggedness, and it is certain that the unduly neglected German master deserves the honour of this beautiful composition.

In the three following prints, dated 1514, by Hans Baldung, we see four witches at their active ritual preparations. The first shows them engaged in the fantastic task of compounding the unguent, or sorcerers' grease (Fig. 28). Among the

ingredients of this were the blood of the lapwing and the bat, the raspings of bells, and soot. One of the conclave is grinding the drugs in a little cauldron—the traditional cauldron owned by every witch—and the others are looking, with admiration and envy, at an old witch, more diligent than themselves, who is already riding among the clouds on her way to the Sabbath, mounted on her fork and followed by a goat.

We find them next (Fig. 29), the unguent made, anointing the fork which serves

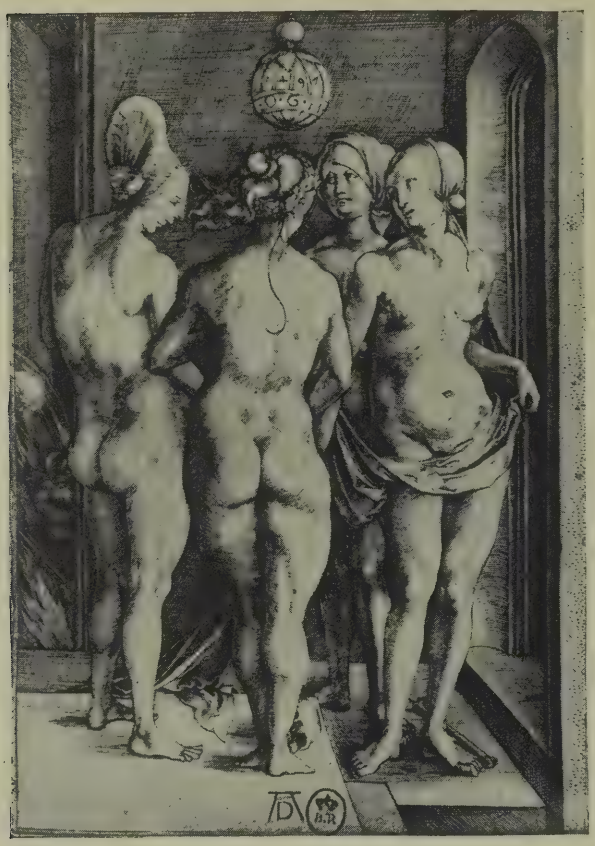


Fig. 26. The Four Witches
Albrecht Dürer (1491).

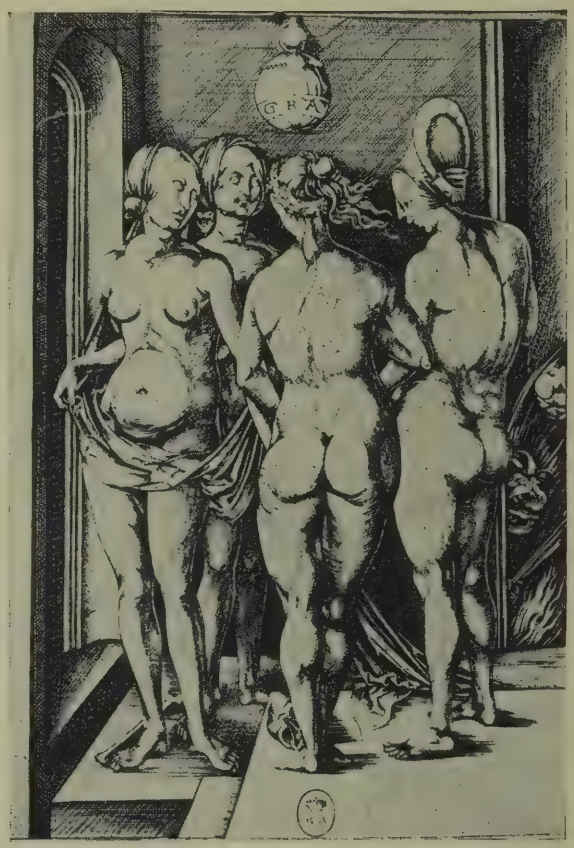


Fig. 27. The Four Witches
Israel van Meckenem (fifteenth century).

them as steed and pronouncing the horrible formula of consecration. One is holding a dish filled with human bones toward the sky, while another tells a rosary. Among the objects which serve as beads on this rosary we note small bells, dice, and the minute skull of a human fœtus. There is no broken crucifix, however, although we had supposed this indispensable to every authentically constructed witch's rosary.

In the last plate one of the witches is hurrying off to the Sabbath (Fig. 30). She is seated face backward upon a goat, which is rushing through the air with her, and she carries the ominous cauldron between the prongs of her fork. Her companions remain on the ground, still preparing their mysterious drugs. A second cauldron is

Fig. 28. Compounding the Sorcerer's Unguent
Hans Baldung (1514).

boiling above a fire of vervain, and a third pours out a whirl of steam charged with malefic elements. A dish holding a sinister offering, which appears to be composed of a child's bodily members, is extended toward the sky by the oldest witch.

The same scene is depicted in a wood-engraving found in an old German book, *Die Emeis*, by Dr Johannes Geiler von Keisersperg, published at Strasbourg by the

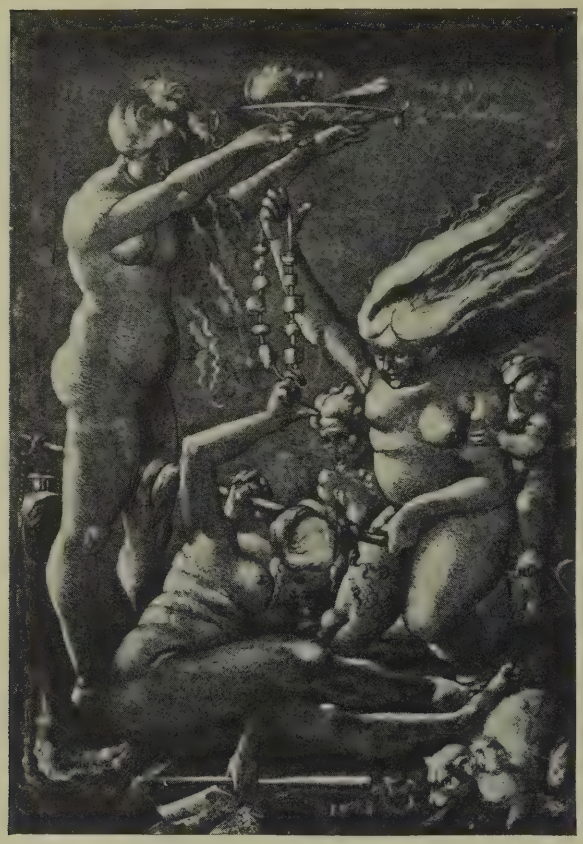


Fig. 29. The Consecration of the Fork
Hans Baldung (1514).

Fig. 30. The Departure for the Sabbath
Hans Baldung (1514).

house of Grüninger in 1517 (Fig. 31). It will be noted that the witches are holding two cauldrons in the air, one of which appears to be mingling its steam with the clouds. Bones are lying about the ground as in Fig. 30. The witch on the right is holding the fork with a piece of cloth fastened to it sail-fashion. This arrangement was sometimes adopted in witches' ridings, as it allowed them to profit by a favourable wind and might also serve as a parachute in case the charm happened to fail suddenly.

Last of all we have the witch triumphant. This phase is shown, symbolized and conventionalized, in a powerful etching by Albrecht Dürer (Fig. 25), where he has sacrificed a trifle of prosaic realism to decorative effect and to his concern for har-

monious composition. Seated majestically, though—in mockery—face backward, upon a goat, the witch is respectfully saluted by a group of Cupids, one of whom ironically raises a thistle or cactus upon his shoulder. The witch holds a distaff and spindle in her hand. As these are emblematic of the Fates, they perhaps signify here that she holds the fate of humans in her hands through her maleficent powers. A simpler interpretation may be that they are a straightforward symbol of very

Fig. 31. An Assembly of Witches
Dr Johannes Geiler von Keisersperg, *Die Emeis* (Strasbourg, 1517).

Woman. This interpretation is supported by the distant view of the calm ocean surface, for the touch of philosophic bitterness so fashionable in the whole of that large part of our period extending from the *Roman de la Rose* to the days of Shakespeare found constant delight in playing with this allusion to the treachery of the waves and applying it to the female sex.

In a very rare incunabulum by the demonographer Ulrich Molitor, entitled *De Laniis et phitonicis mulieribus* and published at Constance in 1489, we see witches seated at table (Fig. 32), taking the notorious repast in the course of which they were accused of eating a new-born child. The presiding witch seems to be consecrating the dish in their midst by saying a Satanic grace.

This slightly defaced wood-engraving is not, however, of such documentary

value as the almost unknown print by Jaspar Isaac entitled *Abomination des Sorciers* (Fig. 33), most examples of which were destroyed by over-zealous opponents of witchcraft. This very completely detailed scene contains almost all the elements of the Satanic art, and evinces the disjointed confusion so readily made, in the sixteenth century, of what we now distinguish as entirely different branches of occultism. We are in a true house of witches. Four of the cult are stripping to the correct ritual attire—the nakedness of Eve. A sorcerer with a bat perched on his head is reading a Black-book in their midst. (Later on we shall devote special attention to the celebrated Black-book; here I may pause to mention that manuscript copies of it used to be hotly competed for at a golden price.) A skull is lying on the ground in the centre of a circle in which Cabbalistic signs are traced. This circle played a most important part in almost all the operations of sorcery; in their proper place I shall give several specimens of it taken from the most authentic treatises. Beside the circle another book of magic is lying open, surmounted by a pentacle composed of two interlaced triangles; the occultists called this the Shield of Moses or Solomon's Seal, according to circumstances. On the hearth we once more find the prophetic cauldron, in which various fantastic animals have placed themselves. There is a lighted candle and a dead man's hand on the mantel of the fireplace; this is the 'hand of glory,' which will be explained later. A wall-cupboard with shelves on the left holds pots of unguent, drugs, and what is probably the sieve, or strainer, used in divination. By a device frequently employed in pictures of this period the artist shows us, through an open window, the exterior of the house as it would appear at that same moment, its chimney belching clouds of smoke from the witches' infernal kitchen and two terrified peasants fleeing from it.

Fig. 32. A Feast of Witches
Ulrich Molitor, *De Laniis et phitonicis mulieribus* (Constance, 1489).

Finally, near the hearth are three naked witches mounting on broom-handles ready to fly through the air; the legs of a fourth, who has already taken flight, are seen disappearing under the mantel of the chimney. It was in this way that witches took the road for the Sabbath. The broom-handle, which has replaced the fork of Hans Baldung, was the indispensable accessory to going to the Sabbath. It was the steed of the Devil, the equivalent of the ogre's seven-league boots;

by means of it witches could, in a few minutes, pass over immense spaces and traverse whole provinces.

Fig. 33. The Abomination of the Sorcerers
Jaspar Isaac (sixteenth century).
Author's collection.

As the broom-handle was the steed, so was the chimney the natural path by which its frequenters set out for the Sabbath. A witch could not leave by the door or even

Fig. 34. An Assembly of Witches
Frans Francken (1581–1642). Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna.

the window; the dark, mysterious hole of the chimney, where only the sweep's boy could venture without quaking, was her customary channel of communication with Heaven, or at least with that relative paradise where Satan lorded it, awaiting his faithful and his vassals.

The same scene is interpreted with sombre intensity in the splendid picture by Frans Francken (1581–1642) entitled *An Assembly of Witches* (Fig. 34); this is exhibited in the Kunsthistorisches Museum at Vienna. In the foreground we find the same young woman taking off her stockings that we found in Fig. 33. Beside her is a companion who is frightened at the thought of the deed she is going to do—very certainly for the first time. An old woman is rubbing the unguent on the back of a naked witch; two others are busy stirring the contents of the cauldron and blowing the fire, and a third is reading a Black-book. The picture has other details not at all common which will be more fittingly studied in a succeeding chapter.

It was quite probably this picture and some of the others I have reproduced which inspired Goethe with the strange scene of the witch's kitchen in the first part of *Faust*. He too was careful to see that his witch took flight by no other road than the chimney on her way:

> Beim Schmause
> Aus dem Haus
> Zum Schornstein hinaus! [1]

The witches are again to be seen taking this fantastic path in a little wood-engraving which forms the frontispiece—in some copies only—of the *Dialogues touchant le pouvoir des sorcières et de la punition qu'elles méritent*, by Thomas Erastus (Fig. 35). It represents a witches' house about the end of the sixteenth century. The engraver has shown it in section, thus permitting a simultaneous view of what is happening outside and inside.

[1] "To the feast,
Out of the house
By the chimney!"

Four witches are preparing to go to the Sabbath. One of them, ready before the others, has already flown, and, issuing from the chimney-top on her broom-handle, is speeding away to some distant Brocken. Another follows close behind; the chimney hides her body, leaving only her legs and the end of her broom visible. A third is binding her leg with a garter, probably of wolf-skin. The fourth has not yet begun her preparations and remains crouched on the ground, waiting until room is made for her. The touch, however, which gives life to this little picture

Fig. 35. Interior of a Witches' House
Thomas Erastus, *Dialogues touchant le pouvoir des sorcières et de la punition qu'elles méritent* (Geneva, 1579).

and adds a note of singular realism is the presence of the inquisitive youth who peers through the keyhole, hoping to surprise the witches in the secret of their operations. Obviously taken from life as it is, this gesture shows plainly enough the desire the uninitiated must have felt to know about the terrible mysteries of the Sabbath. Nor has the artist failed to suggest the envy inevitably excited by those privileged ones who could boast of having made their clandestine excursions and braved the sanguinary wrath of the magistrates.

Here we come to a question of prime importance. Which way should the handle of the broom be held during the flight—with the head downward or upward? If we consult the oldest engravings, those of the sixteenth century, we find that it was

held with the head downward, as shown in the print by Breughel (Fig. 135). Pause to observe, by the way, the delightful anachronism of the artist in introducing a witch flying up the chimney into a scene from the life of St James. The same position is shown in the splendid composition by Jakob van den Gheyn (Fig. 36), where a witch flies through the sky above a dreadful cauldron pouring out clouds of smoke and steam.

Fig. 36. Departure for the Sabbath
Jakob van den Gheyn (seventeenth century).

At the beginning of the seventeenth century, however, witches would seem to have perfected their methods in adopting a new style. Henceforth they fly with the head of the broom held upward, and, as a further refinement, they fix a lighted candle in the faggot of twigs composing it. This would serve to light them on their way, and would give them, moreover, in their flight through the air a sinister appearance well calculated to terrify peasants and other simple folk, who would cross themselves, in field and village, on seeing them pass.

In his picture the *Departure for the Sabbath* Teniers has given a representation of the employment of this novel method. The scene has all Teniers' accustomed

animation, and is not without an elegance of its own. The picture itself is now lost, but the engraver, Aliamet, has happily preserved the memory of it in a splendid print (Fig. 37). In the foreground an old witch, hardened to her trade, is preparing some horrible brew in a bowl by the light of a candle ; she has a peasant's tanned and leathery face and certainly goes in no fear of the Devil, whom she would drub if need were. She is not bothering about the presence of the demon who flutters beside her. The magic circle is drawn on the floor, with its accompaniments of skull, lamp, and ritual dagger driven into the ground. In the background, before the blazing hearth, another old witch, with the clear-cut profile of a cameo and austere as a vestal, is reading her magic book and smearing unguent on the body of a third witch, who is going to fly up the chimney. This last is young, with hair falling on the nape of her neck in childish curls. One may guess that she is a novice by the unskilled awkwardness with which she holds her broom. A gambler might wager—and would win his bet—that she goes to the Sabbath for the first time, for the shudder which runs along her back hints plainly enough at her uneasiness and the trepidation at the bottom of her heart. She dare not avow these fears, for the inexorable old witch at her side would say to her, as Bossuet said to Mlle de La Vallière at the time she took her vows as a nun, " Go, my sister, and finish your sacrifice ; the fire is lit, the incense is prepared, the blade is drawn ! " So the luckless young creature will rejoin her companion, seen in flight disappearing under the mantel of the chimney, who has taken the shape of an animal, sloughing her own human form for that of a tailed satyr. We shall see the significance of this metamorphosis later.

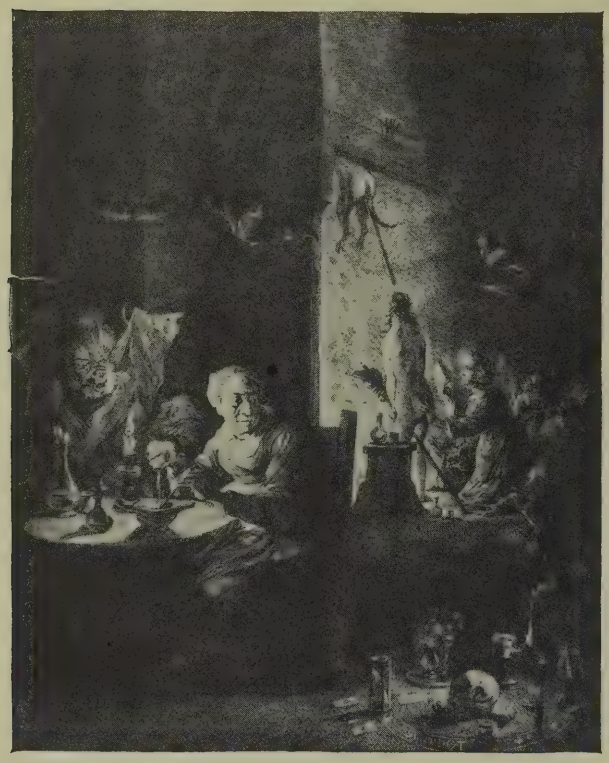


Fig. 37. Departure for the Sabbath
Teniers, engraved by Aliamet.

The beautiful print after Queverdo (Fig. 38) is more sober in detail and completely free from fantastic elements. Three creatures only are shown, toad, owl, and cat, and these are the inseparable companions of every witch. The body of the witch is being anointed with the unguent by an old woman who has the conventional

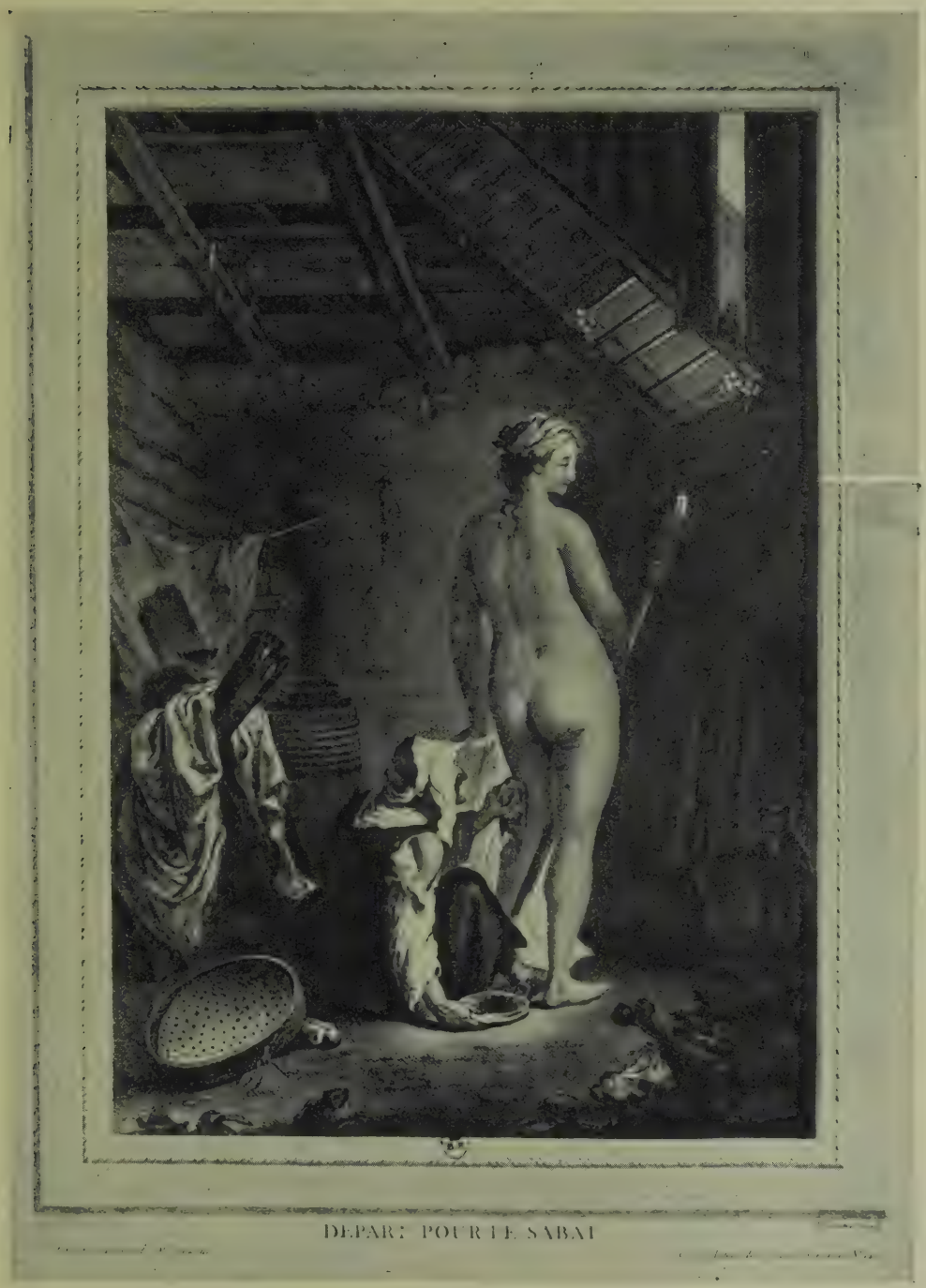


Fig. 38. Departure for the Sabbath
Queverdo, engraved by Maleuvre.

face of Punch ; she is not reading the Black-book. The witch herself is young and pretty, for although we habitually join the epithet ' old ' to the name of witch, there were many young witches who essayed the daring adventure of the Sabbath.

This print, however, is already flavoured with the Romantic spirit. The heroic age of sorcery has passed, and in spite of the skilful composition and the beautiful handling of the engraver, there is a touch of comic opera about the witch, who has none of the burning faith with which her elder sisters are still imbued in the work of the jovial Teniers.

Fig. 39. Witches transformed into Animals
Ulrich Molitor, *De Laniis et phitonicis mulieribus.*

In numerous documents it is shown that sorcerers and witches were accustomed to attend the Sabbath in their proper human form, but in Fig. 37 we have already caught a glimpse of a transformation which was sometimes effected, probably in the case of those witches who were most expert and specially cherished by Satan, for, like him, they assumed some animal form, most often that of a he-goat. The engraving shown in Fig. 39, taken from an old book by Ulrich Molitor, is very significant in this regard. It shows two witches whose heads have been changed into shapes vaguely sheep-like being taken to the Sabbath by a demon; all three are perched in kindly comradeship on a single broom. This composition might well suit a stained-glass window, and it shows clearly that the possibility of their assuming a diversity of shapes was an actual, though perhaps unformulated, article of faith among the beliefs respecting witches.

The transformation took place at the moment of passing under the chimney-mantel, sometimes even a little sooner. Goya selected the latter phase for his startling picture of *Transformation of Sorcerers*, now at the Alameda of the Duke of Osuna (Fig. 40). It is apparent that the Spanish master was well informed on points of sorcery, and this is no matter for astonishment, since Spain began to be a country of witches a very long time ago and still is so to-day. We

learn from Guillaume Le Breton that sorcerers who foretold the future were found there as early as the thirteenth century—in the time of the Countess Matilda, who consulted them habitually—and then, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, we quite unexpectedly come across this picture by Goya in a direct line with the dimmest ages of sorcery. Four hideous sorcerers are shown changing into beasts; their ugliness is treated with a terrible realism not at all in the manner of the old representations, conventionalized as these always were. One of the company has changed completely into a wolf; he watches one of his companions who is flying up the chimney, and makes ready to take the same road himself. This work is treated with the satiric ruggedness which generally characterizes Goya, and is marked by a disturbing sincerity.

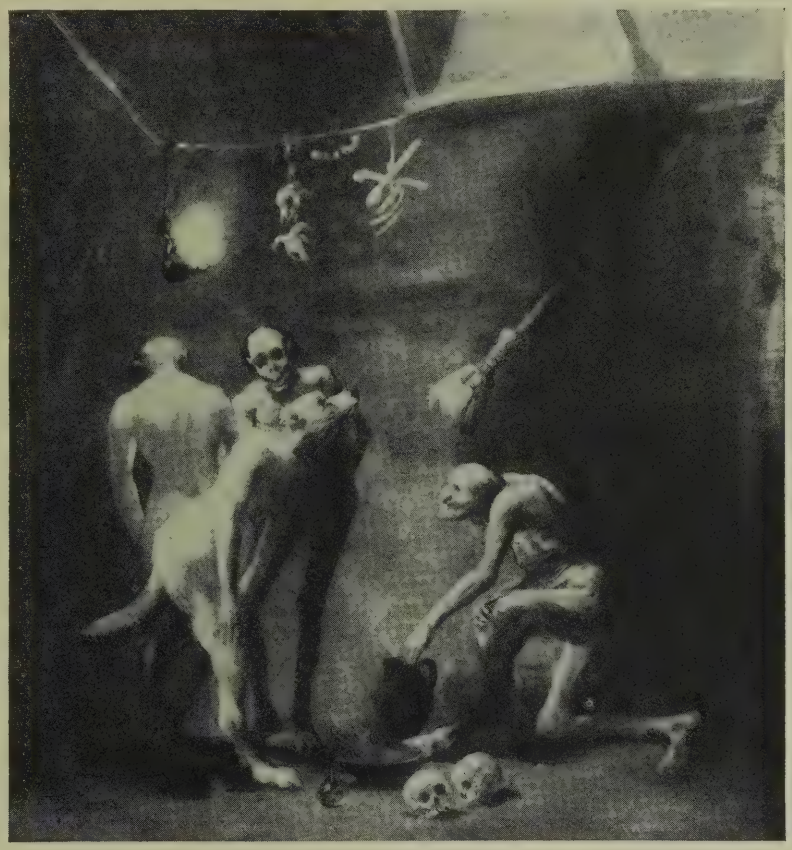


Fig. 40. Transformation of Sorcerers
Goya (Alameda of Osuna).

It was alleged that when a sorcerer felt himself summoned to the Sabbath it was impossible to prevent him from going there, and that he was able to make way past any barrier and, if necessary, to pass through a keyhole if the attempt was made to shut him in. Very often, in this event, sorcerers transformed themselves into animals so as to escape more readily from those who tried to defeat their intentions. The case is cited of the husband of a witch who wished to keep her from going to the Sabbath. He tied her to the bed with ropes, but she changed into a bat, succeeded thus in freeing herself, and flew away up the chimney. There is even a story that in 1547 a witch, haled before the Inquisition in Navarre, was able to bring her jar of unguent with her and so managed to fly off through the air before the very eyes of her judges, changing into a screech-owl as she did so. By this flight she of course escaped the sentence awaiting her.

Witches thus transformed into animals, chiefly wolves, spread terror throughout the countrysides. The demonographer Boguet, in his *Discours exécrable des sorciers* (Rouen, 1603), recounts how a hunter one day met an enormous wolf in the mountains of Auvergne. The brute attacked him, but he succeeded in cutting off one of its paws, and it then fled howling. The hunter put the paw in his wallet and went on his way to ask the hospitality of a friend of his in those parts, a young nobleman. There, wishing to show the spoils of his hunting, he pulled the paw out of his wallet and saw, to his great astonishment, that it had changed into a woman's hand with a ring upon one of the fingers. The friend recognized this ring for one belonging to his wife. He sent for her, and saw that one of her arms was wounded and that she was hiding it under her garments. The arm lacked a hand, and it was the hand the hunter had brought. She was forced to confess that she was a witch and had changed herself into a wolf in order to go to the Sabbath. Her husband gave her up to justice, and she was burned.

The Sabbath excited the keenest curiosity among all classes of society, and many were the men and women who tried to gain access to it; but it was often very difficult to find a sponsor willing to undertake the responsibility of initiating them into the preparatory ceremonies and presenting them to the assembly, for the initiates of the Sabbath as a rule kept their secrets most jealously. The preparation of the unguent, without which a journey through the air was not possible, was an especially precious secret. The substance was very hard to obtain; sometimes the Devil himself presented it. This must have been a rare occurrence, but it was none the less attested by the five women who were charged with witchcraft at Arras in 1460; they declared:

> When they desired to go to the said sorcery, with an ointment which the Devil had delivered to them they anointed a wooden rod which was but small and their palms and their whole hands likewise; and so, putting this small rod between their legs, straightway they flew there where they wished to be, above good towns and woods and waters, and the Devil guided them to that place where they must hold their assembly.

Furthermore, this mode of locomotion was not without danger. Tradition tells of the cases of many sorcerers, novices especially, who, riding on a broom-handle in company with a demon, were unhorsed by him and found next morning hooked perilously in the branches of trees or stretched with shattered frames in some field, very much as if they had been modern aviators.

Many of the uninitiate, failing in their quest for the desired guide and introducer, attempted to join in the Sabbath clandestinely, but this attempt seldom succeeded. That forbidding author, Del Rio, in his *Controverses et recherches magiques* (Paris, 1611), tells how a charcoal-burner who learned that his wife was going to the

Sabbath wished to go there too. One night, therefore, he pretended to be asleep and saw his wife rub herself with an unguent, after which she vanished up the chimney. He at once found the pot of unguent, anointed himself likewise, took the same road as she had done, and was carried into the cellar of an old mansion, where he found his wife with the whole assembled Sabbath. His wife instantly made a secret sign, and all the company disappeared. The charcoal-burner was left alone in the depths of the cellar, where he was found by the people of the house, who took him for a thief. He had the greatest difficulty in getting out of a very bad scrape.

There is another account of a German citizen who managed to persuade a neighbour to take him to the Sabbath. They mounted a broom-handle together, but at the moment of reaching their destination the citizen was smitten with fear and began to mutter prayers, whereupon the sorcerer immediately flung him off the broom. He fell to the earth with giddy speed, and found himself in an unknown region, the language of which he could not speak. It took him three years to get back to his own country, which turned out to be several hundred leagues away.

VI

THE SABBATH

PREPARED, as I have shown, by their partial gatherings, sorcerers and witches were able to attend their plenary gathering, the important and still famous display of the Sabbath.

This accursed gathering, which will always remain one of the most disquieting features of the Middle Ages, was certainly the Satanic master-work. In Western Europe it took place among the menhirs on the heaths of Carnac, in Brittany, or on the summit of the Blocksberg in Germany, or in the demoniac church of Blokula, in Sweden ; sometimes even—if one can believe the Abbé Thiers—on the summit of the Puy-de-Dôme, in Auvergne. The ninth-century Benedictine, Réginon de Prum, would seem to have been the first to mention it. In his work *De Ecclesiasticis disciplinis* he recommends that search be made whether there are any women who say that they go to assemblies of demons and who ride by night on beasts ; if there be any such they are to be driven from their parish.

The best-known and most frequented Sabbath was undoubtedly that held on the Brocken, or Blocksberg, in the Hartz Mountains. This region forms part of the Black Forest, and is one of the wildest and most savage of Northern Germany. It was here, in the district of Schierke, that, in memory of the ancient tradition, Goethe placed the Sabbath of his *Faust*—a version more fantastic and critical than truly authentic.

The renown of the Brocken Sabbath was so considerable that, in the middle of the eighteenth century, geographers who drew maps of this region never failed to show witches riding on broom-handles on their way to the central point upon the dedicated mountain.

In Fig. 41 is shown one of these curious German maps designed by an engineer named L. S. Bestehorn in 1732. It was published in 1749, and afterward reproduced, in 1751, by a publisher at Nuremberg. The latter provides a cautionary note as to the measure of fantasy for which the engraver was responsible.

In the middle of the map the Brocken rises majestically, dominating a great number of other mountains—*Bructerus Herciniæ montes supereminet omnes*, as the inscription above the peak solemnly puts it. Six witches are swooping through the air, by means of broom-handles, from Halberstadt, Wernigerode, Zellerfeld, and all Germany. The legend annexed to the map explains that at the summit of the

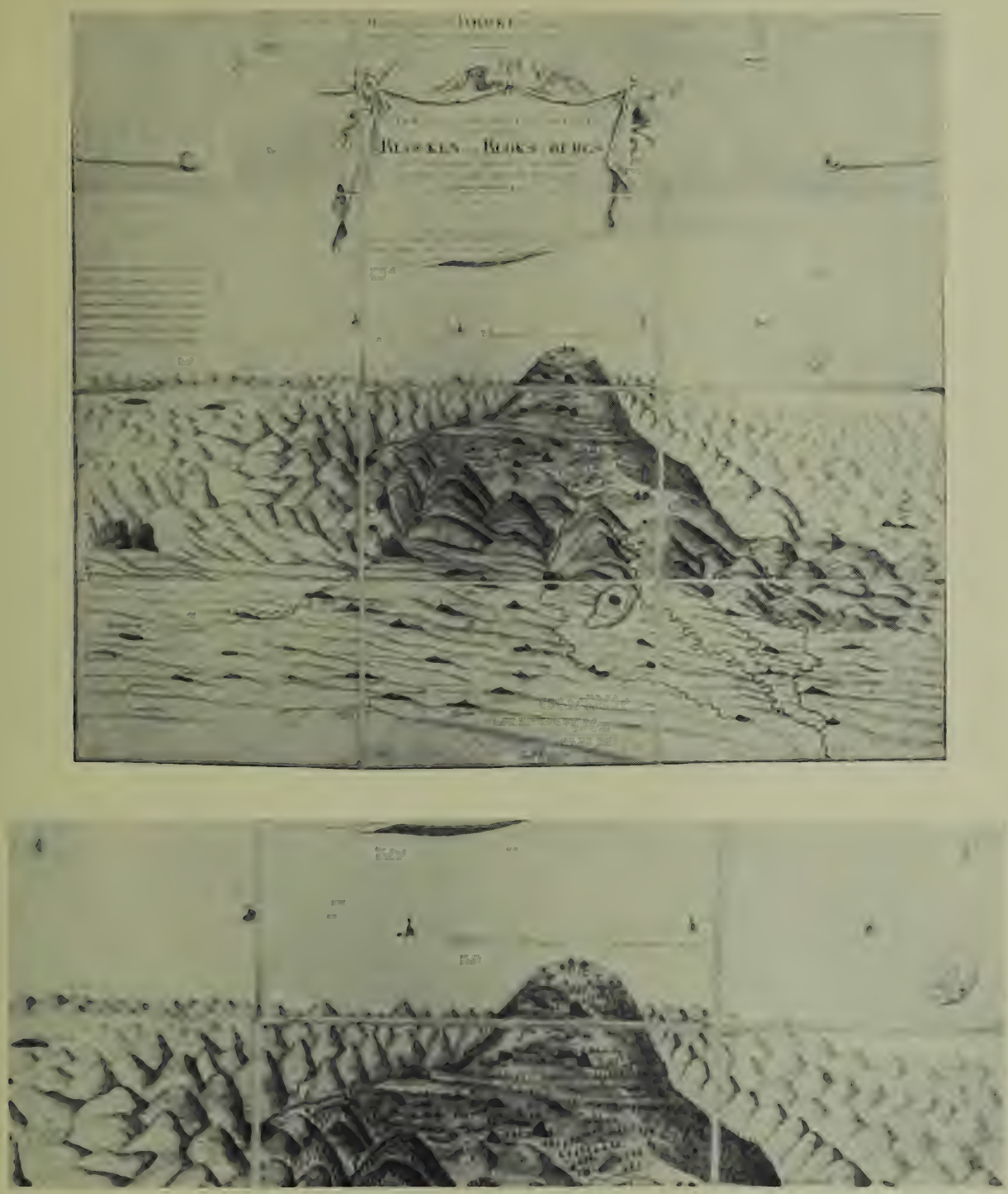


Fig. 41. The Brocken Mountain

German map showing witches going to the Sabbath. The lower illustration is an enlargement of the centre portion of the map.

L. S. Bestehorn (Nuremberg, 1751).

mountain is the famous "Witches' Ground," where the Sabbath takes place, and quite close to it an altar, formerly consecrated to some false deity of the pagans, and a spring, both of which were utilized in the diabolic ceremonies.

As we shall readily suppose, the Sabbath was held in the depth of night, and the assembling of the witches was all the more sinister on that account, judging from Aliamet's engraving after the picture by Teniers (Fig. 42). This forms a pendant to the *Departure for the Sabbath* by the same master, of which also we give a reproduction (Fig. 37). The witch, who in this instance has not disrobed, advances through a cluster of demons. She has entrusted her broom to a bird-faced demon in exchange for the torch with which she lights her way. Bats and barbastels and other fantastic creatures surround her, and a curious mannikin holds his small figure erect before a lantern placed on the ground. A frontier signpost, dramatically lighted and cutting the sky like a gibbet, marks the limit of the Satanic territory.

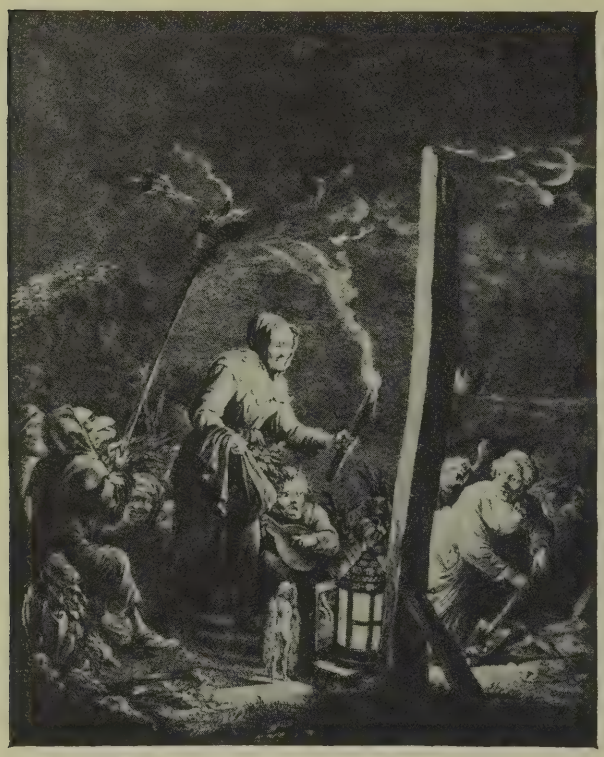


Fig. 42. Arrival at the Sabbath
Teniers, engraved by Aliamet.

We must not suppose that the Sabbath was always conducted according to a uniform and unvarying ritual. As well as we can judge from descriptions left us by various authors of the gravest stamp, the basic ceremonies might be the same, but at least easy-going caprices were not excluded. Satan presided in person, taking the form of a feathered toad, a crow or raven, a black cat, or, most often, a he-goat. The judgment pronounced at Arras in 1460 against several persons accused of sorcery—that is to say, of making pacts with demons—mentions that they went to the Sabbath, "and there found a devil in fashion of a he-goat, of a dog, of a monkey, and, by times, of a man." Some of these odd shapes are seen in the three engravings given here. These are extracted from the Révérend Père Guaccius's *Compendium maleficarum*. The Bibliothèque Sainte-Geneviève in Paris has a copy of this work, which may be strongly recommended. In the first picture (Fig. 43), where he is receiving the homage of those who have come to the Sabbath, Satan is seated on a throne, and his visage is plainly that of a he-goat. In the second (Fig. 44), in which

he is addressing an edifying discourse to his disciples, although he remains suitably horned his snout is prolonged into the semblance of a bird's beak. In the third (Fig. 45) he is shown rigorously exacting a pact from a crowd of novice sorcerers, and his face is blunted to a simian appearance.

We have a description of the Sabbath which took place on the Puy-de-Dôme every Wednesday and Friday in the year, in the course of which the General Chapter of the Devil was held. The description was given by Florimond de Rémond, a coun-

Fig. 43. Sorcerers paying Homage to the Devil

Guaccius, *Compendium maleficarum* (Milan, 1626).

Fig. 44. Satan pronounces a Discourse to Sorcerers

Guaccius, *Compendium maleficarum.*

cillor of the Bordeaux Parlement in the seventeenth century. He had been present at a Sabbath, and in his book, the *Antipapesse*, he tells that toward midnight on the Eve of St John about sixty persons were assembled in a field round a he-goat who was the Devil. He made the sign of the Cross at them with his left hand, and all then approached and saluted him in an irreverent manner. The Goat had a black candle between his horns; he lighted it "by drawing it under his tail," says the grave Councillor. Then every one who carried a similar candle lit it at that of the Goat. "In this assembly they said Mass after their own fashion, turning their backs upon the altar. He who officiated at the Office was garbed in a black cope without a cross, and he elevated a slice of turnip coloured black instead of the Host."

Fig. 45. Satan demands a Pact from Novice Sorcerers

Guaccius, *Compendium maleficarum.*

Evidence even more respectable is afforded by the Très Révérende Mère Françoise Madeleine de Chaugy, who was secretary of St Joan of Chantal and Superior of the chief monastery of the Visitation. Among the lives of the nuns belonging to this monastery, published by her at Annecy in 1659, she gives the following details concerning Anne Jacqueline Coste, one of the most edifying of these pious recluses. She was a shepherdess, and

> during the night of the Feast of St John the Baptist, as she told, this devout shepherdess and her companions heard a noise and a very dreadful uproar, and, looking on all sides to see whence could come these frightful howlings and these cries of all sorts of animals, they saw at the foot of the mountain the figures of cats, goats, serpents, dragons, and every kind of cruel, impure, and unclean animal, who were keeping their Sabbath and making horrible confusion, who were uttering words the most filthy and sacrilegious that can be imagined and filling the air with the most abominable blasphemies.

From such imperfect narrations—well calculated, however, to provoke our curiosity—we shall try to extract some precise notions, with the aid of the few iconographic documents dealing with the subject.

There are two important representations of the Sabbath in existence, and these may be regarded as the best and most consistent with the details given by the principal demonologists. One is a print by the Polish engraver I. Ziarnko (Fig. 46), which is found annexed to some copies of a sombre book by Pierre de l'Ancre, *Tableau de l'inconstance des mauvais anges et démons, où il est amplement traicté des sorciers et de la sorcellerie* (Paris, 1610). The other is a picture by Spranger ; the original of this is lost, but there is an excellent engraving of it in the bizarre work by the Abbé Bordelon, *Histoire des imaginations extravagantes de Monsieur Oufle* (Fig. 47). These two compositions palpitate with headlong movement and a resistless turbulence, and the personages are swept along in a wild infernal dance by the feverish stir of all this frantic and disordered tumult. There is a close suggestion of the Bacchanalia and Saturnalia of the ancients,

Fig. 46. The Sabbath
Engraving by I. Ziarnko, in Pierre de l'Ancre's *Tableau de l'inconstance des mauvais anges et démons* (1610).

of which, indeed, the Sabbath appears to be a continuation, although in a shadowy and degraded form. Both plates show a fundamentally similar scene and have an

identity of detail; the first, that by Ziarnko, is accompanied by an explanatory legend which allows us to study it with a precision rarely possible in these cases.

The Sabbath in Fig. 46 is presided over by Satan, who is, the legend says, "in a gilded pulpit, under the form of a he-goat, and preaching to his congregation. His horns are five and the fifth is alight, whereat all the candles and fires of the Sabbath may be lighted." We should observe that this goat, marked A, is a true animal, and has not yet been given the half-human form we find in Fig. 47.

Fig. 47. The Sabbath
Spranger.
Abbé Bordelon, *Histoire des imaginations extravagantes de Monsieur Oufle* (Amsterdam, 1710).

The appearance of a goat ascribed to Satan at the Sabbath is an evident survival of antiquity. It is the Mendes of the Egyptian decadence, a combination of faun, satyr, and goat Pan tending to become a definitive synthesis of the anti-divinity. The he-goat is sometimes the steed of Venus, and was also sacrificed to Dionysos, who clothed himself in its skin; while among the Jews it was the scapegoat who was burdened with all the sins of Israel. From this confused mingling of paganism and Biblical history the goat at length emerges as the invariable presidential form consecrated to all the Sabbaths of Europe. It is easy to imagine the glee with which Goya seized upon a tradition of such welcome decorative value and placed the awe-inspiring goat in his fresco called *Sabbath, or the Gathering of Sorcerers*, in the Prado

Museum at Madrid (Fig. 48). The inordinate monster is shown gigantic, his horns entwined with leaves, and an old witch is offering him the sacrifice of a child.

Returning to Fig. 46, we see above the letter B "the crowned Queen of the Sabbath," and, on the left of the Devil, "one less favoured." These are two privileged witches; they appear also in the Sabbath by Spranger (Fig. 47) in the figures of the two women one of whom is leaning toward the arm of Satan's throne.

Fig. 48. SABBATH, OR THE GATHERING OF SORCERERS
Goya.
Fresco in the Prado Museum, Madrid.

Further with regard to this particular point, it is accepted that Satan had his favourites among the witches and readily entered into amorous relations with them. Without going into the obscene business of the incubi, we may note that intimacy frequently occurred between demons and women. The austere book of Ulrich Molitor provides us with an illustration showing a witch amorously clasping a handsome young man in her arms (Fig. 49). We should not suspect him of being a demon but for the feet, taloned like those of a bird of prey, which betray his true nature.

Before the throne of the Satanic Goat (Fig. 46) a witch, marked C, presents to the demon a child she has brought to the Sabbath, who has undoubtedly been stolen by her. It would seem that Satan was very greedy for these juvenile recruits, and if witches were unable to seize the child of some neighbour they were obliged to bring their own children to the Sabbath, if they had any, under penalty of losing favour in the eyes of the Master of Hell. One of the two favourite witches in Spranger's picture (Fig. 47) also is presenting a child to the Devil, and we find this same scene

again in the work of the praiseworthy Père Guaccius, who will be found a very sure guide in all the ceremonies of the Sabbath (Fig. 50). On these occasions the Devil found a godfather and godmother for the child, made it renounce God, and marked it in the left eye with the point of one of his horns.

In the lower right-hand corner of Fig. 46 we find the banquet of the Sabbath. The characteristics of this banquet have been strongly disputed. Some witches claimed that the table-cloth was golden and that delicious wines and dishes were served, but many authors dissent from this, among others de l'Ancre himself, who has this unattractive description of the banquet :

Fig. 49. A Demon making Love to a Witch
Ulrich Molitor, *De Laniis et phitonicis mulieribus.*

> Here behold the guests of the Assembly, having each one a demon beside her, and know that at this banquet are served no other meats than carrion, and the flesh of those that have been hanged, and the hearts of children not baptized, and other unclean animals strange to the custom and usage of Christian people, the whole savourless and without salt.

The horrible dish seen in Fig. 46 is, in fact, quite plainly composed of the sundered members of a child, just as in the print by Spranger (Fig. 47), but the repast of which worthy Père Guaccius has left us a valuable vignette (Fig. 51) seems to be better devised. It is served by male and female devils, and the dishes they carry are numerous and appetizing, so far as one can judge from a wood-engraving. This would seem to give a certain amount of reason to the claim of those witches who said that the Sabbath banquet was a pleasant one. The reader may refer also to Fig. 32, in which Ulrich Molitor shows witches enjoying a very well cooked meal in intimacy.

Near the feasters in Fig. 46 we see, marked E, some persons admitted as spectators only. These were, says de l'Ancre, " several poor witches, who were thrust into

far corners and dared not draw near the grand ceremonies." But he calls our attention to the letter F, and adds :

The belly filled, the dance begins ; for after they have devoured meats either fleeting

Fig. 50. Sorcerers presenting a Child to the Devil
Guaccius, *Compendium maleficarum.*

Fig. 51. Feast of Sorcerers at the Sabbath
Guaccius, *Compendium maleficarum.*

and illusory or most hateful and abominable every demon leads the witch who was his neighbour at table beneath the accursed tree, and there, one facing toward the centre of

Fig. 52. Sorcerers at the Sabbath dancing to the Sound of the Violin
Guaccius, *Compendium maleficarum.*

Fig. 53. Dancing at the Sabbath
Guaccius, *Compendium maleficarum.*

the dance, the next toward the outside, and so on for all, they dance in round, stamping and capering with movements the most indecent and obscene that they are capable of.

At H the artist has placed a second troupe of dancers—" women and girls who dance in round, facing outward all of them." At G there are musicians playing

upon instruments of the period—a violin with arched bow, a theorbo, a recorder, and a harp. In the Sabbath according to Guaccius also they are dancing to the sound of a violin played by a fiddler perched in a tree (Figs. 52 and 53), but the performance is very different from that shown in Spranger's picture (Fig. 47), where

Fig. 54. Acrobatic Dance at the Sabbath
Part of Fig. 47 enlarged.
Abbé Bordelon, *Histoire des imaginations de Monsieur Oufle.*

Fig. 55. Acrobatic Dance of a Sorcerer
Abraham Palingh, *'t Afgerukt Mom-Aansight der Tooverye* (Amsterdam, Andries van Damm, 1725).
Royal Library, The Hague.

the round is going at the wild and galloping pace proper to the Sabbath. We should especially remark the four persons who are pirouetting dangerously in an acrobatic dance before the throne of the Goat (Fig. 47 and also Fig. 54). This is the real diabolic dance, the authentic *tripudium* of the ancients, in which, under the influence of the spirit possessing him, the dancer finds himself endowed with muscular powers hitherto unsuspected and abandons himself to activities of which he would be incapable in his normal state. An example of this type of possession is seen in the sorcerer (Fig. 55) who, to the utter amazement of his friends and neighbours in the comfortable little Dutch town, is performing the dance of the

Sabbath upon his bed. This illustration is taken from a vignette found in an exceedingly rare book by Abraham Palingh entitled *'t Afgerukt Mom-Aansight der Tooverye.*

I have already spoken of the witch's cauldron, which figures in all the gather-

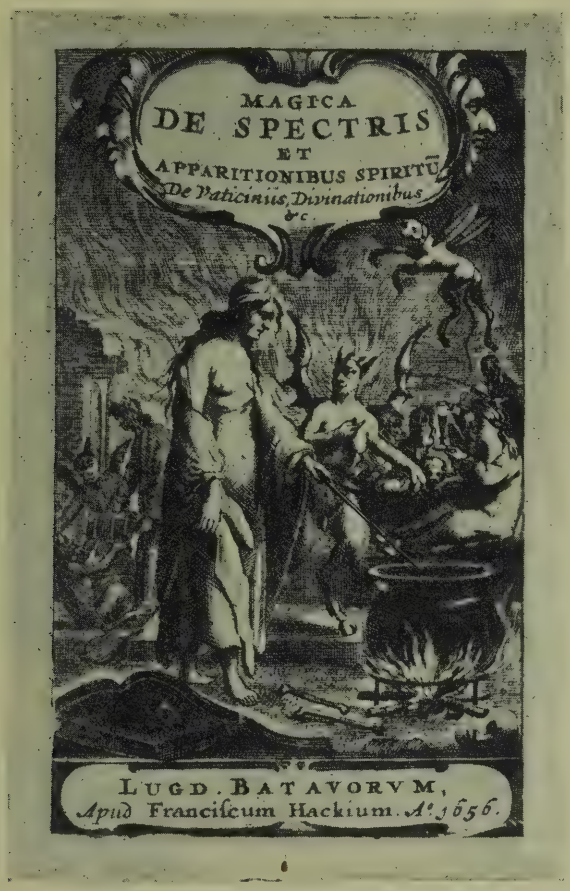


Fig. 56. The Witch's Cauldron
Frontispiece of *Magica de spectris et apparitionibus spiritum*, by H. Grosius (Leyden, 1656).

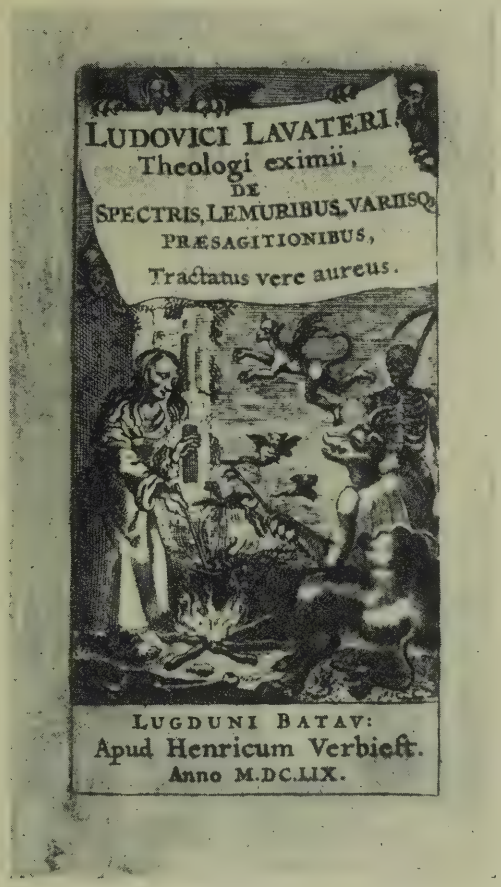


Fig. 57. The Witch's Cauldron
Frontispiece of *De Spectris, lemuribus, variisque præsagitionibus*, by L. Lavater (Leyden, 1659).

ings preparatory to the Sabbath. We find it again at the Sabbath itself (Figs. 46 and 47), and here is de l'Ancre's explanation of it :

> Here behold the cauldron upon the fire for making every sort of poison, whether it be for hurting or killing men or whether for marring cattle. Thereby a witch holds serpents and toads in her hand, and another witch cuts off their heads and flays them and so casts them into the cauldron.

The part played by the cauldron is of the first importance ; some authorities go so far as to consider it the very essence of the Sabbath. It is for this reason that we find it occupying the most prominent place in the frontispieces of two seventeenth-century works in which demons and the Sabbath are copiously treated. The first,

by Hennigus Grosius, is entitled *Magica de spectris et apparitionibus spiritum* (Fig. 56); the second, by Louis Lavater (" excellent theologian," says the title-page), is entitled *De Spectris, lemuribus, variisque præsagitionibus* (Fig. 57).

De l'Ancre informs us that all the while the Sabbath lasted witches went on arriving on broom-handles or he-goats ; the latter sort were less common, it seems, and would be reckoned among the privileged. The goats they rode upon would be nothing less than transformed demons. The witch from Lyons Cathedral, shown in Fig. 23, is mounted on a goat. Ulrich Molitor shows us a sorcerer passing through the Swabian countryside on his way to some mysterious reunion of his fellows (Fig. 58) ; he, again, is riding a young goat whose horns have not yet sprouted. Other witches left the Sabbath, says de l'Ancre, " and went therefrom over the sea and elsewhere to stir up storms and tempests." Later we shall see some of these interesting personages doing work of the kind, in which they were formerly credited with very terrible powers.

Fig. 58. Sorcerer riding on a Goat
Ulrich Molitor, *De Laniis et phitonicis mulieribus.*

The goat is also the steed assigned to witches by the Révérend Père Guaccius when he gravely states this problem : " An Sagæ vere transferantur de loco ad locum per nocturnos conventus."[1] He shows us a witch astride such a steed (Fig. 59) crossing hills and valleys to answer the calls of the Master. It seems that sorcerers and witches had a mark imprinted by Satan upon some secret part of their body, and that a kind of painful tingling in this vulnerable spot warned them when they were to go to the Sabbath.

At L in Ziarnko's engraving of the Sabbath we see a group of very well dressed persons who play no apparent active part in the assembly. De l'Ancre tells us that " these are great Lords and Ladies and other rich and powerful ones who handle the great matters of the Sabbath, where they appear cloaked, and the women with masks,

[1] " Whether witches are in truth borne from place to place on their nightly gatherings."

that they may keep themselves always hidden and unknown." The Sabbath was frequented, as an actual fact, by people of quality. It would be a great mistake to suppose that " destitute witches " and ignorant shepherds were its only spectators and actors. The numerous engravings here reproduced from the work of the Révérend Père Guaccius show quite definitely persons taking part in the Sabbath richly dressed in the opulent fashion of the age of Louis XIII. We see puffed trunk-hose with knots of ribbon at the garters, farthingaled gowns and goffered and pleated collars and ruffs, the starched complexity of which surrounds the faces with a network of lace, just as in portraits by Pourbus, Mierevelt, and Van Dyck. Many lords and " civil ladies " frequented the Sabbath as well as the royal Court, and they esteemed it a notable honour to be allowed to support the Devil's tail in the grotesque processions which formed part of the proceedings. There was even a certain priest of Ascain, in Gascony—nowadays a peaceful little spot in the canton of Saint-Jean-de-Luz—who utterly renounced his sacred office in order to officiate solemnly at the Sabbath.

Fig. 59. Witch riding a Goat
Guaccius, *Compendium maleficarum.*

Finally, the legend annexed to Fig. 46 ends with a group marked M. De l'Ancre says that these are " little children who, with white wands and switches, at a place removed from the ceremonies, watch every one of them over the herds of toads owned by those witches who have custom to bring them to the Sabbath." And it was exactly in this innocent occupation that they employed the novices who had already been presented to the Devil, but who as yet could not effectively join in the more substantial demoniac rites on account of their youth. Later on they were admitted to these, as we learn from the Révérend Père Guaccius (Fig. 60), and the demons took prompt advantage of this opportunity by coupling them in incestuous unions, as they are doing here.

Other individual ceremonies took place in addition at the Sabbath, and several of these were practised also in the pacts with demons concluded outside the Sabbath. Newcomers were marked by the Devil, who left the imprint of his claw under their left eyelid (Fig. 61). We should observe how the fact that his plate would be reversed in pulling the print has slipped the engraver's mind, so that he has inadvertently shown Satan impressing his claw on the right eye of the novice.

The Demon used also to make his new friends tread upon the Cross (Fig. 62).

The novices are represented here as having become blind ; their eyes are closed to the Divine Light. He next gave them a Black-book in exchange for the Gospels

Fig. 60. Children admitted to the Sabbath for the First Time
Guaccius, *Compendium maleficarum.*

Fig. 61. The Imprint of the Devil's Claw
Guaccius, *Compendium maleficarum.*

which they were renouncing (Fig. 63), and he baptized them anew (Fig. 64) with some unappetizing liquid, the ingredients of which varied according to circumstances, so as to destroy more completely the effect of the Christian baptism. To

Fig. 62. Satan makes his Future Disciples tread upon the Cross
Guaccius, *Compendium maleficarum.*

Fig. 63. Satan gives the Adepts a Black-book in Exchange for the Gospels
Guaccius, *Compendium maleficarum.*

complete the initiation, Satan began to strip the new sorcerers of their clothing with his own hands (Fig. 65), and urged them to adopt a state of Adamitic nudity. This nakedness was customary with many participants in the Sabbath, although it was by no means a general rule.

When the sorcerers and witches arrived at the Sabbath they hastened to render homage to the Dévil, and this homage required a little ceremony which Ziarnko—deliberately, no doubt—has omitted from his authoritative plate of the Sabbath. Spranger, however, either better informed or, perhaps, less timid, has depicted it without shame. The act consisted in giving the Devil a kiss on his posteriors, and in exchange for this signal honour the Devil made the sorcerer a present of a silver louse. Some zealous witches repeated this rite several times during the Sabbath, and kissed the posteriors of every demon they met. Spranger's plate (Fig. 47) shows one of them in the act; she holds a candle in her hand and is kissing the supplementary visage of a passing demon.

Fig. 64. Satan baptizes the Sorcerers anew
Guaccius, *Compendium maleficarum.*

Fig. 65. Satan strips the Sorcerers of their Clothing
Guaccius, *Compendium maleficarum.*

Fig. 66. The Ritual Kiss of the Sabbath
Guaccius, *Compendium maleficarum.*

It is important to remark, on this point, that witches emphatically denied kissing the posteriors of the Devil. "It is not a backside," they said, with a holy—or diabolic—indignation, "but a second face that he has under his tail!" Nevertheless, the Révérend Père Guaccius has not troubled about this subtlety, and the illustration drawn for his book which is reproduced as Fig. 66 shows posteriors unadorned, a vulgar Luciferian backside stripped of pretence, being kissed by a noble lady.

Such was, in its broad lines, the august, inimitable, and grotesque ceremony of

the Sabbath, which spread its shroud of fear over all Europe from the fifteenth century to the end of the eighteenth, and sucked the humblest as well as the most illustrious persons into its whirlpool. Beggars, vagabonds, gipsies, tramps, artisans, tradesmen, men of letters, learned men, abbots, bishops, and princes and princesses—we see them all under the spell of this conception, which haunted the

Fig. 67. The Sabbath
Gillot (eighteenth century).

mind of theologians and magistrates, inspired artists with their most vigorous compositions, and caused uneasiness even in rulers and kings. We have an instance of this in James I of England, who found time to write a fierce indictment against witchcraft.

It was said that there were thirty thousand sorcerers in Paris under Charles IX, and a hundred thousand in the rest of France. One imagines the kind of fearsome, unbridled dance whirled by such a crew in ominous midnights, on the summits of accursed mountains or at the crossroads of the highways.

The description we have given of the Sabbath is consistent, as to part, with what

demonographers have taught us on the subject, and, for the rest, with the numerous representations provided by artists. These repeat themselves from century to century with a rigorous exactitude which indicates the persistence of a tradition and of scrupulously observed ritual forms. Some other supplementary ceremonies certainly took place at the Sabbath, but these we shall have occasion to describe in connexion with the pacts and other Satanic activities.

I shall just mention here the existence of certain other pictures of the Sabbath, but only for the sake of pointing out their inaccuracy and proclaiming their entirely fantastic character. These are works designed or engraved in the eighteenth century which are wholly remote from the traditional Sabbath. Their sole birthplace is the imagination of the various artists, who neglected the most elementary documentation. *The Sabbath* of Gillot belongs to this class (Fig. 67). It is a very beautiful composition, with an undeniable decorative effect, but none of the essential elements of the classic Sabbath are to be found in it. It certainly shows, on the right, a he-goat crowned with flowers, giving his hand to a woman who seems to be the queen of the Sabbath, but he is leading the dance in an extraordinary fashion without stirring from the stone seat upon which he is enthroned. And never elsewhere was a Sabbath seen presided over by a witch such as this, who, perched aloft on a rock, an owl on her head and the zodiac slung over her shoulder, is reading the Black-book ; to the vast delight, not only of the demons, but of the goat with the stature of a wild ass who is laughing because a demon has exploded his tail. By a last touch of the absurd the tail is rigged out in a pair of spectacles.

The work has undoubtedly some satirical intention, which in any case escapes us, but we cannot class it in good earnest among the authentic representations of the Sabbath.

VII

THE EVOCATION OF DEMONS

I STILL think, reluctant though I am to be lightly assertive on so serious a matter, that not every sorcerer went to the Sabbath.

This was a collective ceremony to which the initiated, as we have seen, were irresistibly called by a secret signal, and there was some danger in going. Those who dared obeyed the Demon and put themselves, so to speak, at his mercy.

But there were other sorcerers who, on the contrary, commanded the demons and imposed obedience upon them. They summoned them at their will, forced them to appear if they should delay in coming, held them prisoner in their own dwellings, and gave them leave of absence only when they chose. In this case the sorcerer was no longer, as at the Sabbath, a sort of servitor and courtier of the Devil-king ; he was the master. Surrounded by demons who formed a kind of clamorous and snarling Court, he had something of the guise of a wild-beast tamer in the midst of his menagerie ; this would not be without its flattering effect upon his self-love.

Let us consider the witch in a sharply bitten etching by Petrini (Fig. 68), after a picture by Teniers. She has evoked, for her own personal ends, a whole world of fantastic beings who obey her and dare not approach her. She is not at the Sabbath, but at home in her own domain—some forsaken cavern where she works her magic according to her whim. She is moving with a regal gait, grasping the *arthame*, or magic knife, with the point of which she can instantly dissolve any of the evil spirits who should dare to attack her.

The gentleman in Louis XIV costume (Fig. 69) who struts, cane in hand, with the gesture of the Great King is equally at his ease in the midst of the demons he has just evoked. The Abbé Bordelon has invented this scene for his *Histoire des imaginations extravagantes de Monsieur Oufle*, and although this tireless derider of occultism has shown the elegant sorcerer with an allegorical personage near him reproving his folly, he pursues his exploration among the inhabitants of the infernal regions none the less for that.

Sometimes several persons, whether witches or not, would meet for the purpose of evoking demons together. This was most often done in some abandoned house or ruinous monument, overgrown with brambles and nettles and regarded by the

populace at large with superstitious fear. Such a place was the Tower of the Witches at Lindheim (Fig. 70), into which, even in our own day, people would scarcely dare to venture. I reproduce the plate from the frontispiece of a work by Georg Conrad Horst, entitled *Dämonomagie oder Geschichte des Glaubens an Zauberei.*

It must be definitely acknowledged that accounts of these appearances are so

Fig. 68. The Evocation of Demons
Teniers, engraved by Petrini.

often met with in the historians of the past that it is most difficult to discount them all with a mere negative or a laugh. Manifestations of the invisible have received formal attestation not only in the Church—for which the incredulous have always most unjustly kept their sarcasms, as if she were the inventor of demons—but among the Greeks and Romans and a crowd of Arabian, Persian, Mexican, Buddhist, and Alexandrian authors, and even among the rationalist or atheistic philosophers of the Renaissance.

In the Etruscan necropolis at Corneto, near Civita Vecchia, paintings have been found which represent the evocation of demons. At Rome specialists in magic—like that Libo Drusus of whom Tacitus speaks in his *Annales*—called up the infernal shades by reading incantatory poems. Lucan quotes various secrets of the magicians

which were hated by the gods, *arcana Magorum detestanda*[1]; these consisted in pledging faith to the shades and to Dis or Pluto, King of Hell.

It seems that among the Christians Satan or his subordinates were very eager to render men any minor services they might ask. St Gregory the Great, in his *Dialogues*, recounts how a priest of the province of Valeria imprudently said to his servitor, "Veni, diabole, discalcea me"[2]; whereupon his shoes were swiftly pulled off by an invisible force, and he was so terrified that he at once cried out, "Recede, miser, recede!"[3]

Fig. 69. The Evocation of Demons
Bordelon, *Histoire des imaginations extravagantes de Monsieur Oufle.*

Michael Scot, a famous thirteenth-century astrologer mentioned by Dante, invited some friends to feast with him, but did not, so runs the tale, provide any cooked food; instead, he caused dishes to be brought him by spirits, asserting that they were fetched from the kitchens of the Kings of France and Spain, the Pope, and various other sovereigns of Europe. In his *Vies des capitaines françois*, Book III, chapter 10, Brantôme reports an analogous story about a certain military courtier:

> Many Frenchmen, Spaniards, and Italians told of M. de Salvoyson—and firmly believed it—that he had a familiar spirit who prepared all his memorials and schemes for him and managed the affair so well that none I have seen in Piedmont but believed and affirmed the Devil came and harried him to death and carried him away; but these are errors.

The historian Duclos, also, says that the Abbé of Suizendorff, the Comte de Westerloo, and the Duc de Richelieu caused devils to be evoked by a skilful magician in a quarry near Vienna.

[1] "The execrated secrets of the magicians."
[2] "Come, devil; take off my shoes."
[3] "Hence, vile one; hence!"

Fig. 70. The Tower of the Witches at Lindheim
G. C. Horst, *Dämonomagie oder Geschichte des Glaubens an Zauberei* (Frankfort, 1818).

But the most astounding and unheard-of adventure is that told with great precision by the famous sculptor Benvenuto Cellini in his vivid memoirs, where the sparkling society of the sixteenth century seems to live again before our astonished eyes. He made the acquaintance of a Sicilian priest, Vincenzo Romoli, who took him to the Colosseum at Rome and set to work on some incantations which succeeded so well that at the end of an hour and a half the Colosseum was filled with legions of demons—" comparse parecchi legioni, di modo che il Coliseo era tutto pieno," says he. Benvenuto Cellini declared himself completely satisfied that night: "Io ebbi bene grandissima satisfazione." [1] They went there a second time with a young apprentice of twelve years of age and another companion. The tale that he tells of this second evocation is truly tragic and impressive. The legions came in numbers a thousand times greater than before; very giants seemed to threaten them. The child cried out: " The Colosseum is in flames! Tutto il Coliseo arde, e il fuoco viene addosso a noi! " [2] The necromantic priest himself could not believe his eyes; he was almost dying with fear and declared that he had never seen anything so extraordinary. This scene lasted all the night, and did not end until they heard matins ring. Then the legions scattered before the first gleams of daylight, and soon the four companions found themselves alone in the middle of the Colosseum, whence they returned to their own lodgings in the grip of excessively tumultuous emotions.

It is natural to wonder what actually were these mysterious incantations which had the power of making legions of demons appear thus at will, and whether they have been preserved, or if books are still in existence by means of which one might be able to reconstruct the art of the witches and find once more the key to their infernal power.

Such questions may well occur to many readers whose curiosity has been sharpened, and who fear that perhaps there is nothing but deception behind the thought that past centuries have kept their secret and that the witches carried away with them the enigmatic words which allowed them to open the gates of the lower regions.

They may be reassured: nothing is lost. The arsenal of the witches and the sorcerers remains intact, and any reader who cared to repeat the experiment of Benvenuto Cellini's friend, the Sicilian priest, could do so merely by putting into practice the recipes contained in various old books guarded by the great libraries of Europe. It is only a matter of finding them and he can make the Devil his own.

[1] " I had indeed most perfect satisfaction."
[2] " The whole Colosseum is burning, and the fire is coming upon us! "

VIII

THE BOOKS OF THE SORCERERS

THE two books used for summoning good or evil spirits were called *La Clavicule de Salomon* and *Le Grimoire du Pape Honorius* ; they were widely distributed in the seventeenth century. It is unfortunately true that they were often recast into a single version with innumerable variants, and it is almost impossible to restore the original text of each of them.

These books were formerly in the hands of most sorcerers. Many noblemen possessed copies of them, which they would carry hidden in the sleeves of their doublets. Every physician and learned man had one hidden in some secret nook of his laboratory. The adepts had the same faith in the *Clavicule* as Christians had in their Gospels, and they did not hesitate to credit the illustrious Hebrew potentate with its composition, in spite of all the contradictions the book contained. Nor did it make any difference that the names of Porphyry and Paracelsus were sometimes cited in it, nor that it invoked the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, nor that numerous details borrowed from Catholicism indicated a relatively modern compilation.

Nevertheless, the tradition which attributes the first idea of this manual of sorcery to Solomon is not perhaps so devoid of foundation as one might suppose ; the tradition goes back at least to a very remote antiquity.

The renown of that prince, who reigned over the Israelites on the death of his father David, was universal and extended far beyond the frontiers of the little Jewish nation, if we may judge of it by the illusive and fantastic memory left by Solomon in the minds of Orientals, who regard him, even to-day, as monarch of the whole earth.

The pages devoted to him in the Bible excite our curiosity without satisfying it. They bestow pompous laudations upon his wisdom, which was held to surpass that of all the sons of the Orient and all the Egyptians. He was wiser than Ethan the Ezrahite and than Heman and Chalcol and Darda, the sons of Mahol ; he made himself famous among all the neighbouring nations, and people came from all countries, sent by the kings of the earth, to be instructed in the wisdom of Solomon. It was God Himself Who granted him this wisdom ; one night He appeared to him in a dream and asked him what gift he would desire. Solomon chose wisdom, and the Lord replied, " I have given thee, moreover, that which thou hast not asked,

riches and glory ; in such wise that none shall have been like unto thee in times gone by."

Thenceforth the opulence and incredible pomp of Solomon, his piled-up treasures, his riches in gold, precious metals, and gems were as celebrated as his wisdom and eclipsed the glory of all the monarchs in the world. Long afterward the Saviour Himself recalled the memory of him when He said to the Jews, " Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow : they toil not, neither do they spin : And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these."

Solomon established twelve officers, or *nitzabim,* in Judea to superintend his provision supply. He had fourteen hundred chariots, forty thousand chariot-horses, and twenty thousand saddle-horses. His private and household tables consumed every day thirty *cors* of fine flour (and a *cor* was over ten bushels) and sixty *cors* of meal, " ten fat oxen, and twenty oxen out of the pastures, and a hundred sheep, besides harts and roebucks and fallow deer and fatted fowl " of every sort. All his drinking vessels were of gold, for in his day silver was despised. The palace that he caused to be built for himself was called Iahar-Halibanon—that is to say, the Forest of Lebanon—and it was a hundred cubits long, fifty broad, and thirty high, with ceilings of cedar-wood and a multitude of columns ; he built another like it for Pharaoh's daughter, whom he had married.

He composed three thousand proverbs, or *mashal*, and five thousand canticles, or *shirim.* He treated in his writings of every tree, from the cedar of Lebanon to the hyssop on the wall, and of all beasts, birds, reptiles and fishes. This knowledge of the natural sciences is unusual in a sovereign, but Solomon added to it a knowledge of theology and of the most elevated philosophy, if we are to accept the evidence of the Book of Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Wisdom of Solomon, which pass under his name among the books of the Bible and the Apocrypha.

But the memory of all this pomp and profusion, so well calculated to beguile the imagination of Asiatics, has not been preserved for us by the Bible alone. The famous Persian poet, Firdausī, wrote his history in verse, under the title of *Suleiman-Nameh.* Arab, Turkish, and Persian writers such as Saas-ed-din, Ishag-ibn-Ibrahim, Ahmed-el-Kermani, and Shems-eddin-el-Siwasi, as well as the Talmudists, amplified the story of his fabulous exploits, and have told us many precious details of his life forgotten by the Jews. Under their pen, Solomon, son of David, otherwise Suleiman-ibn-Daoud, becomes a legendary personage without equal in any literature, even in the glowing fictions of India. Not only is he the richest and wisest monarch on earth, but his knowledge has made him the most powerful of men, and he commands all celestial, terrestrial, and infernal spirits ; he is obeyed by the subterranean pigmies and gnomes, and by undines, elves, and salamanders.

The author of the Arabic book *Tarikh-mon-Te-Kheb* reports that he mounted the throne at twelve years of age, and that God subjected to him the jinn—that is to say, good and evil spirits—as well as the birds and winds. The three realms of nature obeyed him likewise, and the very plants taught him their properties.

In his palace paved with crystal Solomon had the jinn and the demons seated at tables of iron, the poor at tables of wood, chiefs of armies at tables of silver, and learned men and doctors of the law at tables of gold, and these last he served himself. According to the Koran, the jinn worked under his eyes, building palaces and making statues, gardens, ponds, and precious carpets. When he desired to visit distant lands he travelled carried upon their backs.

Solomon's seal, his mysterious lamp endowed with magic properties, and above all his ring and his throne are famed still among Orientals.

It was by the power of his ring that he commanded the jinn, and to it, the Arabs say, he owed his high wisdom. One day, having assembled all the demons, he impressed the seal of this ring upon their necks, in order to mark them as his slaves. He lost it once while bathing in Jordan, and was without knowledge and wisdom until a fisherman who had found it inside a fish brought it back to him again. It is believed by some that on this occasion he was robbed of his ring by a jealous jinnee, who seated himself on his throne and reigned in his place, while the deposed Solomon became a wanderer until the moment when the jinnee, compelled by God, threw the ring into the sea.

As to his ivory throne, it was such a marvel that the like of it had never been made in any country of the world. The Bible tells us that it had six steps, and two lions by the arms, and twelve young lions upon the steps, six on one side and six on the other; but Mohammedans, always greedy for the marvellous, add that the jinn had made it of the most precious sandalwood and that the two crouching lions were surmounted by two eagles; to crown the wonder, when Solomon mounted the throne the lions spread out their claws, and when he seated himself the eagles shaded him with their wings. Jalal-ud-Din amplifies these details still further by asserting that the throne was a veritable monument of gold and silver, forty cubits wide, sixty long, and thirty high; a crown of rubies and emeralds encircled it, the columns which supported it were made of the same precious stones, and it was entered by seven doors. It is said by some Talmudists that when Solomon mounted the throne heralds posted on each of the steps proclaimed to him the duties incumbent upon him as sovereign, and that when he sat down a dove flew out of the throne, opened the Ark of the Covenant, and took out the Torah and gave it to him that he might study it; and the twelve golden lions sent forth terrifying roars.

The Koran suggests, finally, that this throne at first belonged to Balkis, Queen

of Sheba, from whom it was stolen at Solomon's command by the jinnee Ifrit, who carried it to the King in the twinkling of an eye. Arabian commentators on this passage add that demons buried books of magic beneath the throne and spread the report, after Solomon's death, that they were the books by whose science he had subjected men and jinn.

Nothing authentic or conclusive results from all this jumble of legendary tales. The learned men of old time who devoted themselves to the study of the natural sciences, of herbs, of plants, of simples, of stones, and of stars, were often taxed with sorcery, and in the Middle Ages the Bishop of Ratisbon, Albertus Magnus, shared with Solomon the glory of being the foremost demonologist of his time because he was the foremost naturalist.

It is not impossible, however, that the Jewish monarch may have endeavoured to communicate with the dark powers. The Bible states formally that Solomon did not walk in the ways of the Lord in the same constant fashion as his father, David. When he was young he had sacrificed upon the *bamah*, or high places, and this rite was contrary to the precepts of Moses. Later on, in his old age, this very wise and pious king—who surpassed in wisdom and piety every monarch in the world—often forsook the One God of his forefathers to sacrifice to *elilim*, or idols. His strange women turned him from the way of truth. The daughter of Pharaoh, whom he had married, and other women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Sidonians, and Hittites, perverted his heart and seduced him into serving the Sidonian goddess, Ashtoreth ; Milcom, the god of the Ammonites, called Moloch by Christians ; and Chemosh, the Moabite god.

The Lord then withdrew Himself from Solomon and divided his realm ; and it is a remarkable thing that the Bible, so prolix in its details of his wisdom, his treasures, his horses, and his chariots, is silent about his death. It says only that he slept with his fathers, without specifying whether he persisted in his impenitence or returned to the worship of the Lord. Recourse must be had to apocryphal books such as the *De penitentia Adæ* in order to attain almost complete certitude that he died in sin, and reference to the strange traditions preserved in Scotland during the Middle Ages—Juvenal des Ursins, the historian of Charles VI, has transmitted the memory of them—will show that these held him to be lost and condemned to be eaten by ten thousand ravens every day to the end of the world. Certain Rabbinic writings state that, feeling his strength fail, he besought God to conceal his death so long as the works he had undertaken by the help of demons should be unfinished. Accordingly he remained upon his knees in prayer, leaning on his staff, and the demons, believing him to be alive, continued their work. The Koran adds that a crawling reptile was the first to learn the news of his death ; the beast

gnawed the staff which supported the dead Solomon and thereupon the corpse collapsed. The demons then ceased work.

It is not unlikely that a sovereign who had sacrificed to Moloch, Chemosh, and Ashtoreth should try to evoke demons or write regarding the method of enforcing their appearance. Christian authors have affirmed that he did so. The eleventh-century Leontius of Constantinople, in a sermon he delivered on the Pentecost, spoke of Solomon's power over the demons: "Nonne Salomon dominatus

Fig. 71. The Demon Belial presenting his Credentials to Solomon
Jacobus de Teramo, *Das Buch Belial* (Augsburg, 1473).

dæmonum est?"[1] said he. Gregentius, Archbishop of Taphar, adds that Solomon shut up demons in urns which he sealed and buried in the earth. This tradition retained so much life that in the curious incunabula edition of the work of Jacobus de Teramo, *Das Buch Belial*, Solomon is several times represented holding familiar conversation with demons. First of all we see the demon Belial presenting his credentials to Solomon (Fig. 71); we note the odd detail that the demon is accompanied by Moses, who never leaves him in all the events of this strange history. Next he performs a joyous dance-step before the great King. Solomon smiles, while Moses seems amazed (Fig. 72). Finally Belial leads up four of his unprepossessing companions, who do not succeed in moving the glorious monarch (Fig. 73).

[1] "Had not Solomon dominion over demons?"

Whatever we may think of these legends, in the first century of the Christian era, at the time of Vespasian, a book of incantations for summoning demons was already in circulation under the name of Solomon. The historian Flavius Josephus, who was contemporaneous with this epoch, says that the book was in the hands of a Jew named Eleazar, who, in Vespasian's presence, delivered those possessed of devils by applying to their nose a ring chased with the figure of a root designed by Solomon for this purpose; he recited at the same time the words set down by Solomon in

Fig. 72. The Demon Belial dancing before Solomon
Jacobus de Teramo, *Das Buch Belial.*

this book. With fresh formulas added to it in the course of time, this work may possibly have been the embryo of our present *Clavicule de Salomon.*

From that time onward we continually see Solomon's books of sorcery mentioned by various authors all down the ages. In the eleventh century the Greek writer Michael Psellus speaks of the treatise on stones and demons composed by Solomon. Another Byzantine historian of the thirteenth century, Nicetas Choniates, in Book IV, paragraph 7, of his history of the Emperor Manuel Comnenus, makes mention of a book which can only be the *Clavicule de Salomon*; it was in the hands of Aaron Isaac, interpreter to the Emperor, and he says that "he who should read it could cause legions of demons to appear."

It was about the thirteenth century that the Black-book would appear to have passed from the Byzantine into the Latin world. A tradition attributes the new

Pentacles pour se rendre les bons esprits favorables

Six Pentacles to influence Good Spirits Favourably

La Clavicule de Salomon (eighteenth century).

Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, Manuscript No. 2349

version of it to Pope Honorius III, who succeeded the great Innocent III in 1216 and was suspected of sorcery, as were Leo III, John XXII, and Silvester II. During the same period one of the continuators of the *Chronique* of Guillaume de Nangis cites a list of the names of demons compiled by a monk of Morigny, near Étampes. By means of this one could obtain wealth and other benefits, which is strangely like the *Clavicule*. The monk Roger Bacon, who died in 1294, also had a knowledge of the books on demonology ascribed to Solomon, but, thoughtlessly enough,

Fig. 73. Belial and four other Demons appearing before Solomon
Jacobus de Teramo, *Das Buch Belial.*

he recommended the denial of Solomon's authorship of them, on the grounds of the great wisdom of this king, whose apostasy and fall he had apparently forgotten. A large book entitled *Le Livre de Salomon* was burned by order of Pope Innocent VI about 1350; according to the evidence of Nicolas Eymeric, this was filled with evocations and rules for evoking demons. In the twelfth century the Greek historian Michael Glycas, again, speaks of Solomon's book concerning the jinn and the means of calling them from the invisible world. The devout Abbé Tritheim is another to mention the *Clavicules de Salomon*, in his book, *Antipalus maleficiorum*; needless to say, he denies their authenticity, like Roger Bacon.

In this way our present Black-book, so widely distributed among the libraries of Europe, would actually be a mixture containing ritual ceremonies of Hebrew origin, such as the slaying of the kid, the first conception of which might very well go back

to Solomon, side by side with invocations old or new. Among the more ancient of these invocations is the formula "Xilka, Xilka, Besa, Besa," found also on the cuneiform tablets of Nineveh. Others, more modern, appear to have been borrowed from the strange dialects of the Zingari. Instances of these are the formulas which Rutebœuf and Jehan Bodel, of Arras, in their mystery plays, have put into the mouths of the magicians Salatin and Tervagans—"Bagahi laca Bachabé" and "Palas aron azinomas." Add to all these various Arab, Byzantine, and Latin rehandlings, with a framework of Catholic prayers, and we end at length in producing this formless confusion of a book, which is yet not without some prestige of antiquity.

Once we have reached the last years of the Middle Ages manuscript copies of the Black-book are henceforth more and more widely distributed. Learned men of the Renaissance, like Petrus Mozellanus, took great account of them, and a printed edition first appeared at Rome in 1629, to be followed by others.

These printed editions, however, have no practical value. Tradition demands that a self-respecting sorcerer should possess the *Clavicule de Salomon* in manuscript, written, as far as possible, in his own hand, and observation of this rule assures the better success of his demoniac operations.

The Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal in Paris contains a fairly considerable number of these manuscripts. They originated in the collection formed in the eighteenth century by a whimsical soldier, Antoine René de Voyer d'Argenson, Marquis de Paulmy, who had a craze for romances and books of occultism. The best of them is certainly that numbered 2350 and entitled *Le Secret des secrets, autrement la Clavicule de Salomon ou le véritable Grimoire.* The title well indicates the fusion which had taken place between the works attributed to Solomon and Pope Honorius respectively. The calligraphy of this eighteenth-century manuscript is very good; it has few diagrams, but contains various ceremonies not found in other manuscripts.

A marginal note in the hand of the Marquis de Paulmy, facing the title-page, informs us that "Nobody has seen a Hebrew manuscript of the *Clavicule de Salomon*; the Jesuit Père Gretser says that he saw one in Greek in the library of the Duke of Bavaria, and the Abbé d'Antigny cites several Latin copies bearing the titles of *Claviculæ Salomonis ad filium Roboam* and *Liber Pentaculorum.*" This manuscript contains a preface not existing in any other and composed, apparently, at quite an early date—perhaps even in the Byzantine epoch; this would seem to confirm the traditions already stated as to the origin of the book.

In the preface King Solomon entrusts his *Clavicules* to his son Rehoboam: "'Remember, my son Rehoboam, that thou art dearer to me than all the things of the world, as the Creator of all creatures has gathered into me all wisdom.'"

Rehoboam replies, " ' What are my deserts, since in that I am like unto my father ? ' " Solomon answers him :

> " The Angel of the Lord revealed it to me one night in a dream ; I named the most holy Name of the Lord, Yahweh, and I merited the means that may not be named, the means of Wisdom, which the Angel Raziel showed me in a dream, whereof the close tale may not be told to the understanding, and said to me, ' Hide well the Secret of Secrets, because the time comes when the universal sciences will be destroyed and utterly hidden and will become void ; and know that thy time is near.' Then I arose like a drunken man and shaking with fear, and I bethought me what I must do in this thing."

Then the King recommends Rehoboam to bury with him in his sepulchre the book of the *Clavicules de Salomon*, and the preface proceeds—introducing by the way a mysterious unknown personage, Tozgrec, who is probably imaginary, since no historian mentions his name :

> And all was done as he had commanded, and the book remained long hidden and was found in the sepulchre by certain Babylonian philosophers who had been of the companions of Solomon, and they found the said book in the said casket of ivory, and they took it, and no one of them could read it or in the least understand it, by reason of the darkness of the words of the hidden science. Then to a certain most wise philosopher named Tozgrec, being in his chamber, the Angel of the Lord appeared, saying to him : " Behold and read this small book, and the words which are dark to thee it shall be easy for thee to make them clear." Tozgrec thereat rejoiced greatly, and he beheld this book and the small book of Solomon that it was all changed, and he read it ; and he prayed the Lord that never might any ignorant one possess it, and he said :
>
> " I beseech him into whose hands this book shall come, by all the members of his body and by all that he may desire and mean to do, that never will he translate the same nor explain or show it, except it be to the very wise and learned."

After this fine preamble, which seems merely to obscure still more the historic origins of the *Clavicules*, many chapters are devoted to the preparatory operations connected with the evocation of demons. It is pointed out that these are divided into two categories—the good, who can render service, and the evil, from whom one must keep aloof. Catholic theology took care to condemn this distinction ; it held that all demons were indisputably evil.

We then have an enumeration of the qualities requisite in the operator and in his assistants, if he thinks fit to have any. There is also a description of the essential clothing and footgear, of the knife, or *arthame*, of the needle, or burin, the ring, the sceptre, the fire, the Holy Water, the lights, the perfumes, the virgin parchment and the pen, and of the ink and blood to write with ; all these instruments are indispensable to the operation, for the evocation of a demon is not so easy a business as some idle and curious amateurs might suppose.

On p. 30 of the manuscript there is a diagram of the circle—the famous circle which we have noticed already and which will be met with again in every scene of sorcery. Anyone who enters into communication with demons must be enclosed by this circle, under penalty of certain death. "Note that nothing can be done to invoke spirits without a circle," the manuscript prudently enjoins. I reproduce the diagram as Fig. 74. The circle must be nine feet in diameter: this space is ample for comfortable room. It must be traced with the *arthame*, or consecrated knife, and, says the manuscript, "thou shalt make four Pentacles with the names of the Creator, and beyond these two circles thou shalt make a circle within a square by means of the said *arthame*, as the circle here drawn will show and demonstrate to thee."

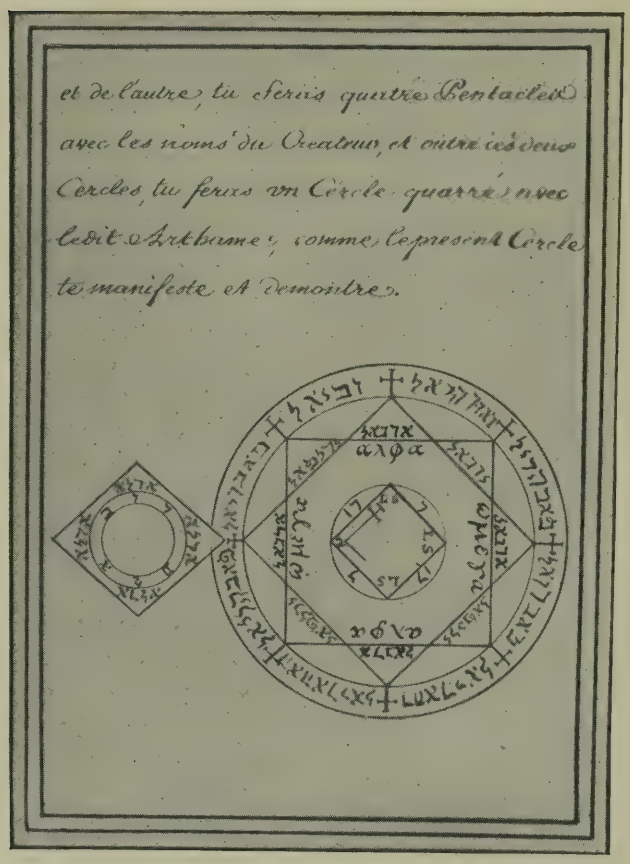


Fig. 74. THE MAGIC CIRCLE
Clavicule de Salomon. Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, manuscript No. 2350 (eighteenth century).

The characters inscribed in this circle are Greek and Hebrew; the formula *alpha*, *omega*, composed of the names of the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet, can be distinguished several times repeated. There is also the word *agla*, an abbreviation frequently employed by the Rabbis and formed of the initial letters of the Hebrew "Aieth Gadol Leolam Adonai," which means "Adonai [the Lord] will be great to eternity." In addition there are several of the seventy-two divine names, all ending in *el*; the reading of some of these is uncertain.

The form of the circle is not, of course, invariable. Another manuscript of the same period in the Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, entitled *Livre de la Clavicule de Salomon, roy des Hébreux* (No. 2348), and purporting to be "translated from the Hebrew language into Italian by Abraham Colorno, by order of His Most Serene Highness of Mantua, newly done into French," shows an entirely different form of the magic circle (Fig. 75). In this there are neither Greek nor Hebrew characters, but the names of the Divinity—Adonai, El, Jah, Agla, Eloha, Ehie, and the word Tetragrammaton, signifying "four letters," the unpronounceable divine name.

The large circle is accompanied by four small ones, and the manuscript gives the following supplementary explanations :

> Have the knife or the sickle consecrated according to custom. Thou wilt trace all round beyond this circle at the distance of a foot, with the centre that of the first circle, and again beyond this circle with the same centre and at the same distance. Between the first circles of the Art that thou hast made thou wilt form, in the space of a foot and directed upon the four quarters of the globe, the venerable signs of the *tau*, and between the second circles of the Art thou wilt make, between four medallions, or Pentacles, the terrible names of the Creator—that is, between the east and the south Tetragrammaton, between the south and the west Eheyt, between the west and the north Elijon, and between the north and the east Eloha, the which thing is of a very great importance in the catalogue of the Sephiroths and sovereign enlightenments.

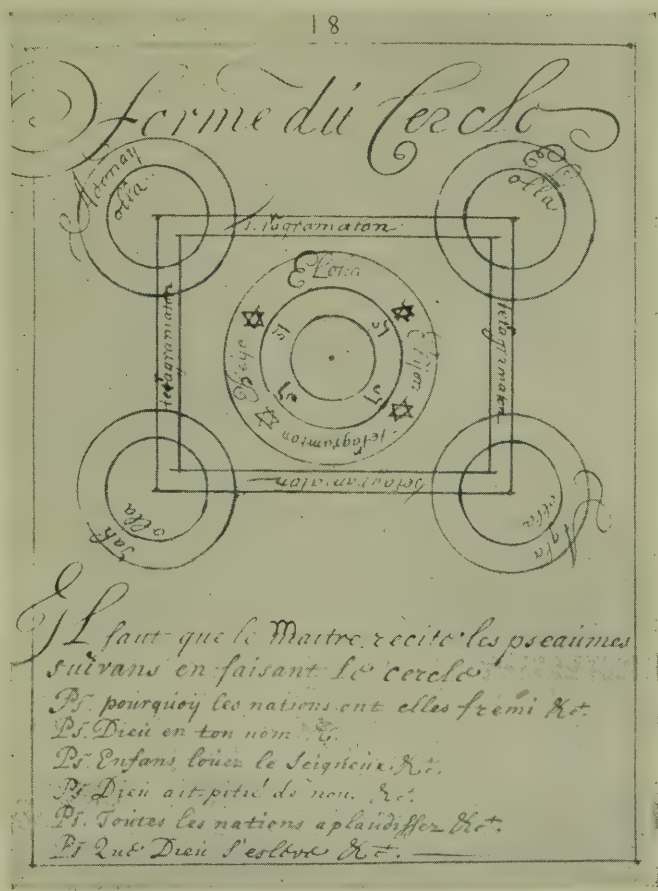


Fig. 75. THE MAGIC CIRCLE

Clavicule de Salomon. Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, manuscript No. 2348 (eighteenth century).

According to the instructions of this manuscript, the operation is performed by a master and four disciples, dressed in linen garments. The master stations himself in the large circle, the disciples in the four small ones.

Manuscript No. 2349 in the same library, entitled *Les vrais Clavicules du roy Salomon, traduitte de l'hébreu par Armadel*, gives a circle of quite a different form (Fig. 76) ; but one still finds the same names of the Divinity—Eloha, Tetragrammaton, Ehoye, Elijon, Zevaoth, Elohim, Zenard (?), Saday—besides the central word " Kis," formed from the three initials of " Kadosh Ieve Sabaoth," " Holy the God of the Septenary " (or " of Hosts," as commonly said).

Fig. 77 shows a simpler circle, but one probably just as efficacious as the foregoing. It is taken from manuscript No. 2344 in the Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal. It contains only the terms *alpha* and *omega*, the word *agla*, and the Latin formula " Dominus adjutor meus,"[1] the whole accompanied by twelve crosses.

[1] " The Lord my helper."

There is a book of magic very different from the works we have been discussing—*Le Dragon rouge, ou l'art de commander les esprits célestes, aériens, terrestres, infernaux*, published by Offray at Avignon. The date is given as 1522, but it was in reality printed in 1822. *Le Dragon rouge* shows a more mysterious and alarming kind of circle (Fig. 78); it is called "the Triangle of the Pacts," and must be made with the skin of a kid, nailed "with four nails." The triangle within the circle must be traced with "an enamelled stone." The "karcist," or operator, stands in the small circle and his assistants in the two others; there are two candles, one on either side, surrounded by wreaths of vervain, and in the forward point of the triangle is a fire made of willow-wood charcoal, brandy, incense, and camphor; this is burning in a new vessel—it must be new. The operator has to pass along the "Path of the T," which will infallibly lead him to the Satanic Treasure.

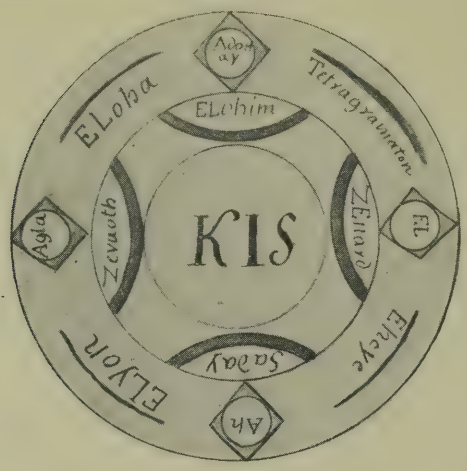


Fig. 76. The Magic Circle
Clavicule de Salomon. Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, manuscript No. 2349 (eighteenth century).

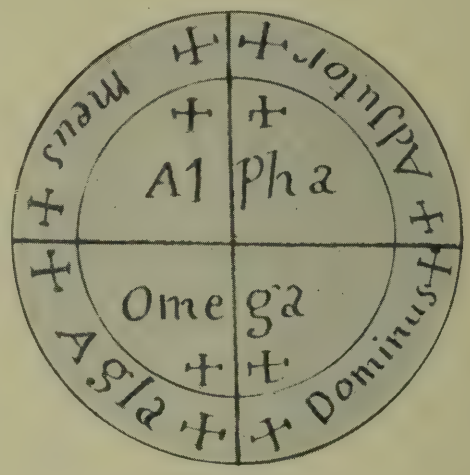


Fig. 77. The Magic Circle
L'Opération des sept esprits des planètes. Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, manuscript No. 2344 (eighteenth century).

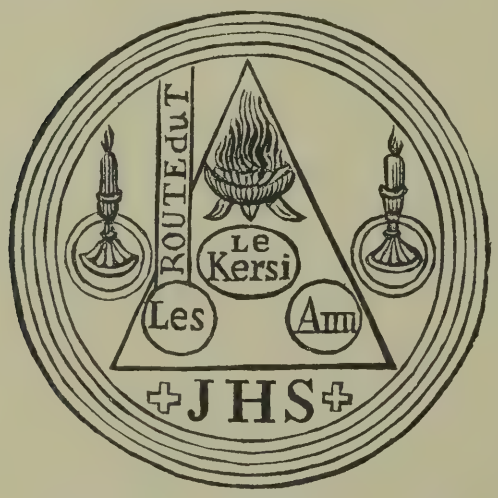


Fig. 78. The Triangle of the Pacts
Le Dragon rouge (Avignon, 1522 (actually 1822)). Author's collection.

Finally, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, we are given two different models of magic circles (Figs. 79 and 80) in a book, *The Magus*, published in London in 1801. The author was Francis Barrett, who attempted to bring about a real revival of occultism in England; the famous Eliphas Levi was largely inspired by him later on. These circles—"in which the operator must take up his position"—comprise, like the foregoing, the *alpha* and *omega* and a selection of the Divine Names. Barrett also shows (Fig. 79) the magic wand, the two candlesticks we saw in Fig. 78, the magic

crystal set in gold, the torch (to be held in the hand or stuck in the ground), and (Fig. 80) the dagger, the ring studded with a pentacle, which must be worn

Fig. 79. The Magic Circle and the Accessories for Evocation
Francis Barrett, *The Magus* (London, 1801).

on one of the fingers, and the Pentacle or Seal of Solomon, composed of two interlinked triangles.

We see, then, that the reader who may wish to call up an apparition of the Devil

will have a bewildering number of circles from which to select the one that suits him, and for his information may be repeated the naïve reflection inscribed by the

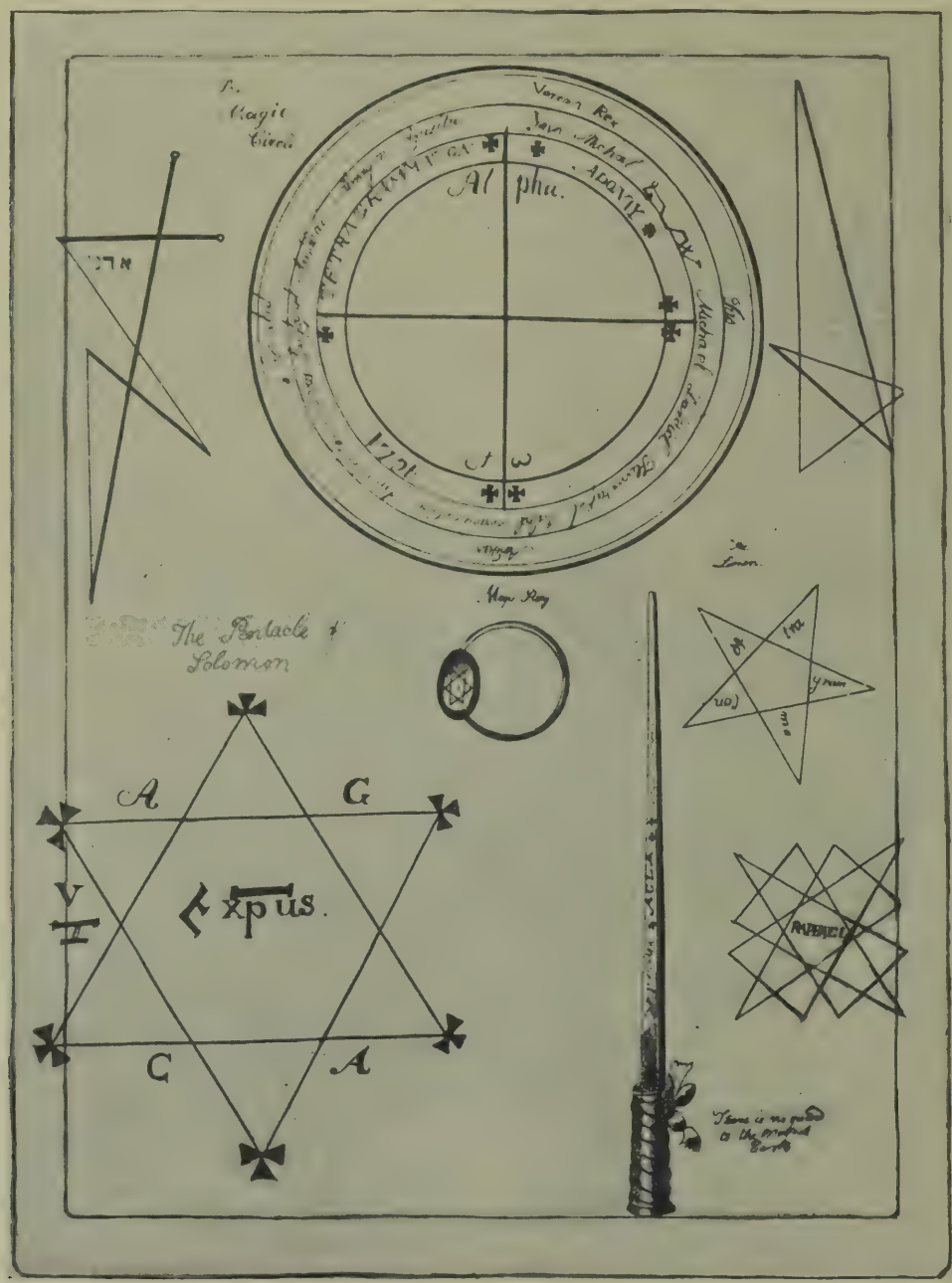


Fig. 80. Another Magic Circle and Pentacle of Solomon
Francis Barrett, *The Magus*.

worthy Marquis de Paulmy on the fly-leaf of one of his manuscripts : " Which is the best ? This can be known only by trying it."

He should, in any case, hold a change of circles in reserve, for manuscript

No. 2349 warns us that " at every time and howsoever many times the master of the art shall, by separate experiments, speak with spirits, he must practise himself in forming circles which shall be different and which shall have something special about them."

The circle being at length traced, the author of manuscript No. 2350 says, " Now thou shalt enter into this circle of the Art ; thou shalt have with thee the Pentacles."

We must inquire what these pentacles are, and manuscript No. 2349, already quoted, will throw full light on the subject. Here are, to begin with, six pentacles " to influence good spirits favourably " (see plate facing p. 108). Each contains a Hebrew name of the Deity, as well as strange and scarcely intelligible formulas, wrongly called Cabbalistic, which we find in all examples of demoniac method—" Tavar alcilo Sedoan acheir, Nestabo cacay extabor erional, Anapheta Dinotor Drion Sarao," and the rest. During the Middle Ages these and similar formulas enjoyed a repute they have possibly not quite lost even to-day. Others like them are found in *Le Miracle de Théophile*, by the celebrated thirteenth-century *trouvère* Rutebœuf, where we find the sorcerer Salatin conjuring the Devil in terms not belonging to any known language :

Bagabi laca bachabé
Lamac cahi achababé
Karrelyos
Lamac lamec Bachalyas
Cabahagy sabalyos
Baryolos
Lagoz atha cabyolas
Samahac et famyolas
Harrahya.

In another thirteenth-century miracle play by Jean Bodel, of Arras, entitled *C'est li Jus de Saint Nicholai*, Tervagans yields his soul to the Devil with the words :

Palas aron ozinomas
Baske bano tudan donas
Geheamel cla orlay
Berec hé pantaras tay.

We find the same language again, nearly four centuries later, in Rembrandt's fine etching, *Dr Faustus* (Fig. 83). Here the master interprets the legend—very famous in his time—and shows the old scholar immersed in a magical experiment in the course of which, instead of tracing the sorcerer's circle on the ground, he sees it appear flaming on the window-panes of his laboratory. Round the initials I N R I, which occupy the central part of the circle, are the words ADAM ✠ TE ✠ DAGERAM, and on the outer circumference, AMRTET ✠ ALGAR ✠ ALGASTNA ✠ ✠ ✠.

A commanding hand moves over a mirror set beside the circle ; its forefinger is pointing out some secret re-ordering of these characters, which seem to defy any reasonable interpretation as they stand.

Manuscript No. 2349 also gives pentacles "for conjuring infernal spirits." These, again, contain several more or less fanciful names of the Divinity, grouped in a workman-like rose-window figure, the efficacy of which ought to be beyond dispute (Fig. 81).

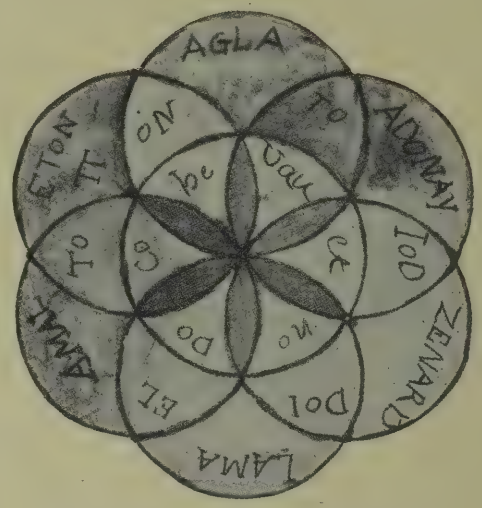


Fig. 81. Pentacle for conjuring Infernal Spirits
Clavicule de Salomon. Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, manuscript No. 2349 (eighteenth century).

Another manuscript entitled *Zekerboni*, No. 2790, by Pierre Mora, " Cabbalistic philosopher," gives what it calls the " Great Pentacle " (Fig. 82), without any commentary whatever. The ground of this is sprinkled with Greek and Hebrew characters of doubtful reading, and among them is a sort of cross accompanied by a curious sign in the shape of a Z ; this sign is found elsewhere in certain treatises on alchemy, in which it is fitted to a circulatory apparatus called the " Athanor [or furnace] of Solomon."

Fig. 82. The Great Pentacle
Pierre Mora, *Zekerboni.*
Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, manuscript No. 2790 (eighteenth century).

The operation now begins :

> When the master with his disciples has arrived he, having set a light to the fire and exorcised it afresh, shall light the candle and set it in the lantern, which one of the disciples shall continually hold in his hand to give light to the master. Another disciple shall hold in his hand paper, ink, and pen, and another a naked sword. The master will light the coals for the incensation, and will enter into the circle bearing a candle and will begin the conjurations. (*Manuscript No.* 2349.)

The manuscript already quoted, No. 2344, *L'Opération des sept esprits des planètes*, further recommends that styrax and benzoin should be burned within the circle in a new chafing-dish ; the reader will doubtless take careful note of this.

Equally with other details the formula of conjuration differs according to the book it is found in. To begin with, here is the version given by this same manuscript No. 2344 :

> I conjure thee, N. (here is the name of the demon invoked), in the name of the living

Fig. 83. Dr Faustus
Etching by Rembrandt.

Great God, Who made heaven and earth and all contained therein, and by His only Son, Redeemer of the human race, and by the Holy Spirit, the merciful Consoler, and by the power of the Heavenly Empyrean, instantly and without delay to appear unto me in comely shape, without noise or hurt done to my person or to my companions, and to reply to all that I shall command thee. Hereto I conjure thee by the Living God El, Ehome, Etrha, Ejel aser, Ejech Adonay Iah Tetragrammaton Saday Agios other Agla ischiros athanatos amen amen amen!

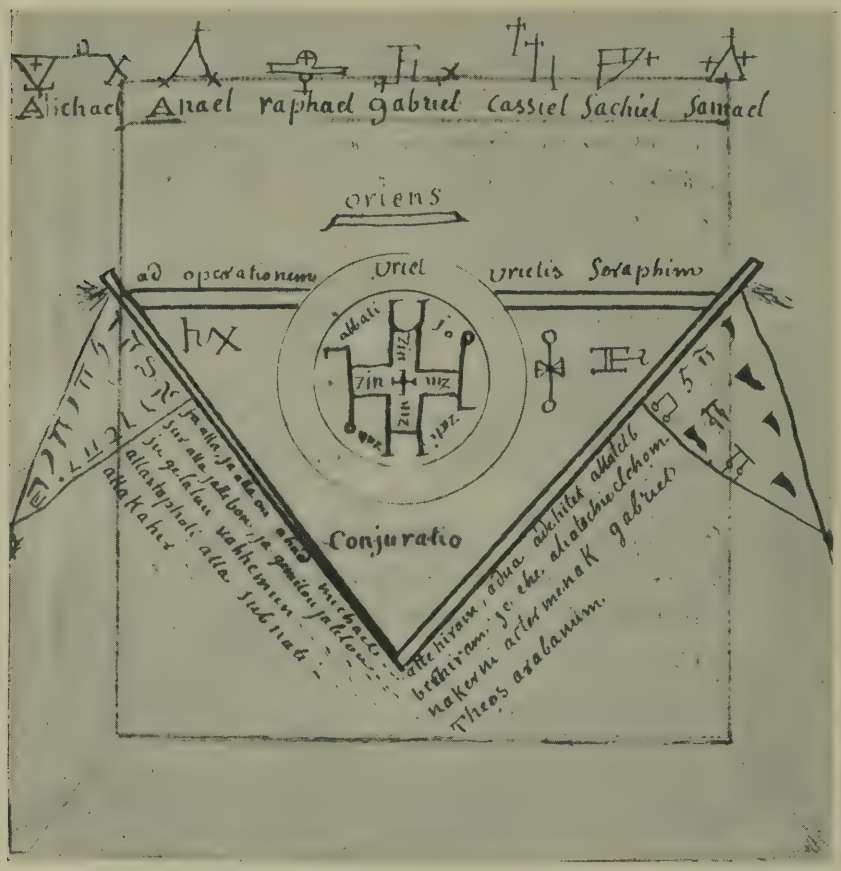


Fig. 84. The Operation of Uriel Seraphim
Armadel, *Grimoire ou la Cabale*. Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, manuscript No. 2494 (seventeenth century).

This conjuration must be written on virgin parchment. After having repeated it three times "if the spirit does not appear unto you the operation must be done three days on end; he will not fail to appear unto you; he will ask you what you desire. . . ." After having replied to him and made use of him as befits, the operator must take great care not to send the demon back to his usual dwelling-place, which would have very terrible consequences for him; he must dismiss him in the following words:

Because thou hast come in answer to the name of God in Whose name I called thee, I return thanks to God. Go now in the peace of God to the place destined thee for all eternity and let peace be between thee and us, and every time and so many times as I shall call thee see thou come in the name of the Father ✠ and of the Son ✠ and of the Holy Ghost ✠ amen!

There is another version called the Great Conjuration. The *Secret des secrets*, manuscript No. 2493, says of this, "From the very moment that it begins note that the demons will tremble." The Great Conjuration is related to the operation of

" Uriel Seraphim " detailed in the *Grimoire ou la Cabale*, by Armadel (manuscript No. 2494), where it is accompanied by a complicated diagram reproduced here (Fig. 84). Here is this curious bit of demoniac literature, which literally explains how to put the Devil into a bottle :

Uriel Seraphim, potesta, Io, Zati, Zata, Abbati, Abbata, Agla, Cailo, Caila, I pray thee and conjure thee in the name of the Living God and by Him, thy Master and mine ; by

Fig. 85. Specimen of the Book of Spirits
Francis Barrett, *The Magus*.

all the might of the Holy Trinity ; by the virginity of the Holy Virgin ; by the four sacred words which the great Agla said with His own mouth to Moses, Io, Zati, Zata, Abbata ; by the nine heavens in which thou dwellest ; and by the virtue of the characters said before, that thou appear to me visibly and without delay in a fair human form, not terrifying, without or within this phial, which holds water prepared to receive thee, in order that thou mayest answer what I desire to ask thee, and fetch and bring the book of Moses, open it, put thy hand upon it and swear truth while making me see and know clearly all that I desire to know ; appear then, I conjure thee in the name of the Great God, Almighty Alpha, and be thou welcome in *galatim*, *galata*, *cailo*, *caila*.

Dismissal is effected as follows :

> Go, beneficent jinnee ; return in peace unto the places destined for thee, and be thou always ready to come and to appear when I shall call upon thee in the name and on the behalf of the great Alpha.

In Francis Barrett's curious work *The Magus* there is a " specimen of the Book of Spirits, which must be made with virgin parchment " (Fig. 85). This shows what a book of sorcery actually was, but we must be careful to allow for a certain embellishment due to the Romantic Age. It is open at the page containing the conjuration appropriate to the chief of spirits, Cassiel Macoton, who is figured on the left in the form of a bearded jinnee riding a dragon. This conjuration of Cassiel, or Saturday, is thus formulated in most of the Black-books :

> I conjure thee, Cassiel, by all the names of the Most Great Creator, which have been told thee and shall again be later, for that thou shalt hearken instantly unto my words and shalt obey them inviolably as the Judgments of the Last Day, trembling at the Judgment ; for the which thou must obey me nor think to deny me because I am a great sinner ; but remember that thou fearest the commandments of God the Most High. Knowest thou not that thy strength is lost before thy Creator and ours ? Therefore think lest thou refuse, the more as thou dost promise me and swear by Him Who has created all with a word and is obeyed by all creatures. I pray, Per sedem Baldacy et per gratiam et diligentem tuam habuisti ab eo hac nalatimanamilam, that I may command thee !

IX

PACTS WITH DEMONS

THE reader will certainly have remarked that all the texts we have just been considering are characterized by a strange mixture of Hebraic and Christian piety little in accord with the demonomania of the Sabbath, which included frankly Satanic ceremonies such as the act of renouncing the Gospels or trampling the Cross underfoot. In this other branch of magic—classified as ceremonial—we had the operator asserting the power of conjuring demons in the names of Jesus and the Virgin.

The Dark Sciences evidently avail themselves of a variety of methods, and certain sorcerers called themselves masters of the demons and took pride in the fact that they neither made any alliance with them nor became subordinate to them. The *Clavicules de Salomon*—with a recollection, no doubt, of the wisdom of their alleged author—are generally collections of formulas suitable for adepts of this kind.

But it was very difficult to hold ground on this hybrid territory. The Church condemned the evocation of demons, whether it was effected in the name of the Deity or of the Devil. The sorcerer who intended to become master of the demons had without doubt to deal with a powerful opponent, and he would be drawn sooner or later into pronouncing the ' pact '—a celebrated formula which consisted, on the part of the evoker, of selling his soul to Satan or one of his satellites in return for certain advantages to be conferred upon him. At the end of a given time the Devil would come to take delivery of his property, a fatal liquidation which the sorcerer strove to evade by every means possible.

We see some imprudent folk of this sort, who have just let themselves be foolishly caught, in the vignette from Père Guaccius (Fig. 86). They have enclosed themselves in a magic circle, but find, after all, that they must conclude the pact forced upon them by Satan as a punishment for having evoked him.

The stories of persons who ' sold their souls to the Devil ' are innumerable, and enter largely into the literature of the Middle Ages. The picturesque and sombre-coloured note they lend is almost unknown in other literatures, and harmonizes exceedingly well with the old towns of Europe and all their scenic accompaniment of houses with carved gable-ends, cathedrals, abandoned abbeys, and ruined castles. The Romantic movement managed to bring these stories into fashion again and to profit by the very marked decorative effects they provided.

The earliest pact known to us is perhaps that of Theophilus, bursar of the church of Adana, in Northern Cilicia or Trachyn, about the year 538. His bishop had deprived him of his office, and in order to recover it he sold his soul to the Devil.

His story was written in Greek by Eutychianus, his disciple, and translated into Latin by Paul the Deacon. Hrotswitha, the famous nun of Gandersheim, used it as

Fig. 86. The Devil forces a Pact upon those who have made him appear
Guaccius, *Compendium maleficarum.*

the basis for a sort of poetic dialogue, and in the thirteenth century Gautier de Coinsy turned it into a French poem. The legend was read at matins in many churches, and Rutebœuf used it for his famous drama *Le Miracle de Théophile*, already quoted. We need not feel surprise, then, at seeing the incident represented on the doorway of the Abbey of Souillac (Fig. 3), in a double scene which may be interpreted thus : Theophilus, having caused the Devil to appear through the medium of the conjurer Salatin, is shown on the left handing over the signed pact which Satan had required of him. "Look it be understood by thee that afterward I have from thee letters clearly expressed and the terms well agreed," the Devil had enjoined him. If his mood was one of deep mistrust he had some excuse—" for many men have deceived me in this matter," he explains. Theophilus

had prepared the letters and delivers them to him, saying, "Here behold them; I have written them."

On the right Theophilus is giving his hands to the Devil. Rutebœuf dramatizes the scene thus:

> THE DEVIL. Now join thy hands and so become my man; I will help thee to the uttermost.
>
> THEOPHILUS. Behold, I do thee homage, fair lord, but I shall have my punishment hereafter.

At the top of the composition we see the Virgin Mary tearing the pact from Satan's hands after a quarrel in which she boldly tells him, using the robust speech of the thirteenth century, "And I will trample on thy belly!"

Rutebœuf faithfully gives the text of the pact, the old phraseology of which is still easy enough to read:

> To all who shall read this open letter I, Satan, let know that the fortune of Theophilus is changed indeed, and that he has done me homage, so might he have once more his lordship, and that with the ring of his finger he has sealed this letter and with his blood written it, and no other ink has used therein.

We can easily satisfy ourselves that the mechanism of the pact hardly varied at all throughout the ages. I have previously quoted *Le Dragon rouge*, which appears to be a popular transcription of the more aristocratic *Clavicules*. This little book gives the formula of the pact with the Devil quite precisely, styling it the "Great Calling of the Spirits with which one would make pact"; this is the form in which it is given:

> Emperor Lucifer, master of all the rebellious spirits, I beseech thee be favourable to me in the calling which I make upon thy great minister LUCIFUGÉ ROFOCALE, having desire to make a pact with him; I pray thee also, Prince Beelzebub, to protect me in my undertaking. O Count Ashtoreth! be propitious to me, and cause that this night the great LUCIFUGÉ appear unto me in human form and without any evil smell, and that he grant me, by means of the pact which I shall deliver to him, all the riches of which I have need. O great Lucifugé, I beseech thee leave thy dwelling, in whatever part of the world it may be, to come and speak with me; if not, I will thereto compel thee by the power of the mighty words of the great *Clavicule* of Solomon, whereof he made use to force the rebellious spirits to accept his pact. Appear, then, instantly, or I will continually torment thee by the mighty words of the *Clavicule*!

The spirit's reply, still according to *Le Dragon rouge*, will be this:

> I cannot grant thy demand but on condition thou give me thyself at the end of twenty years, so that I do with thee, body and soul, what shall please me.

This is the solemn and terrible moment when the supreme decision must be taken. *Le Dragon rouge* gives us the following advice:

> Then you shall throw him your pact, which must be written in your own hand on a

little piece of virgin parchment; it shall consist of the few words given below and shall be signed with your veritable blood:

PACT

I promise great LUCIFUGÉ to repay him in twenty years for all he shall give me. In witness whereof I have signed.

X . . .

Such was the dread formality of the pact, much resorted to in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In spite of its popularity, however, we have few documents concerning it, from the mere fact that those who practised it were under the necessity of eluding the investigations of the competent courts of justice. For besides the ceremonial text which we have just read there was the written renunciation of God, the Virgin, and the saints, which was kept jealously hidden. It was obviously not good to leave a document like that of which an illustration is given in Fig. 87 lying about on some piece of furniture, for the very good reason, without more, that in it the signatory disowned the Catholic Church. The Devil, besides, carried the pact away into Hell—an excellent reason why there are no copies of it in our libraries and archives.

But the famous priest of Loudun, Urbain Grandier, was guilty of this very imprudence. He did not take care enough to conceal his pacts, and the neglect brought him to the stake and the fire. Everybody knows his story, coupled as it is with the last great trial for sorcery of the seventeenth century—a trial much heightened in interest by the fact that Richelieu himself was mixed up in it. Grandier was by no means regular in his conduct and was extraordinarily vain. In the town of Loudun he made many enemies, who accused him of having bewitched the Convent of the Ursulines, where most of the nuns showed signs of demoniacal possession. In 1634 he was condemned at the instance of the Councillor of State, Laubardemont, and declared "attainted and convicted of the crime of magic, witchcraft, and causing possession, the which came by his deed upon the persons of divers Ursuline nuns and others, being laics, and condemned to pray pardon courteously and bare-headed and to have his body burned alive and therewith the pacts and magic characters now resting in the office of the Registrar."

We must believe that the Registrar forgot to carry one of these pacts to the fire, since we find it to-day at the Bibliothèque Nationale, among the collection of papers relating to the Ursulines of Loudun. It is in Grandier's hand, signed and flourished by him, and is entitled *Veu de Grandier* (Fig. 87). It reads as follows:

GRANDIER'S VOW

My Lord and Master, I own you for my God; I promise to serve you while I live, and from this hour I renounce all other gods and Jesus Christ and Mary and all the Saints

of Heaven and the Catholic, Apostolic, and Roman Church, and all the goodwill thereof and the prayers which might be made for me. I promise to adore you and do you homage at least three times a day and to do the most evil that I can and to lead into evil as many persons as shall be possible to me, and heartily I renounce the Chrism, Baptism, and all the merits of Jesus Christ; and, in case I should desire to change, I give you my body

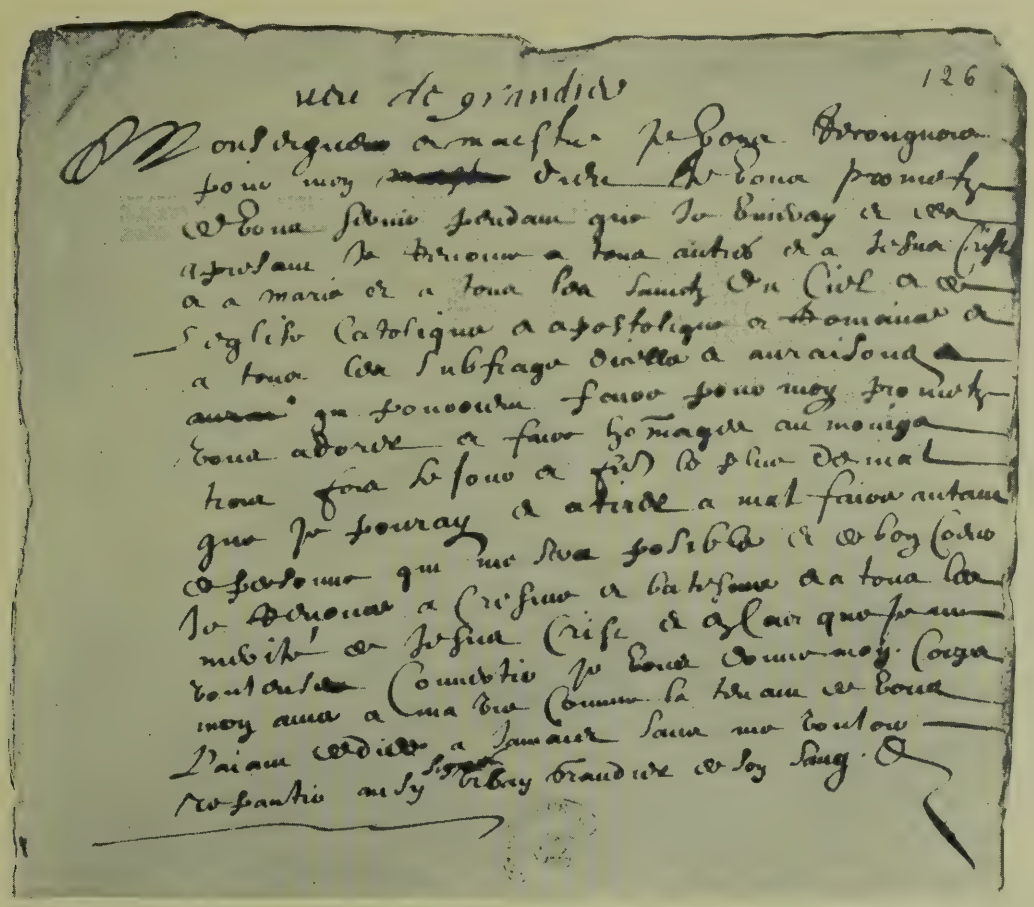


Fig. 87. Autograph Pact of Urbain Grandier
Bibliothèque Nationale, manuscript *fonds français*, No. 7619, p. 126.

and soul, and my life as holding it from you, having dedicated it for ever without any will to repent. Signed Urbain Grandier in his blood.

The most disagreeable side of the pacts was the terrible payment which must come at the end of them, so it was not unnatural that a person who had signed one should exert all his ingenuity to get out of it—in short, to cheat the Devil of the prey he was counting upon. *Le Dragon rouge* even indicates a precautionary prayer for use once the pact was made: "Inspire me, O great God, with the sentiments necessary for enabling me to escape the claws of the Demon and of all evil spirits!" By this one might retract one's word after having got from the Devil all the benefits one had asked him for.

But the Devil kept an eye on those he suspected of not wanting to keep their promise, and he was inexorable when he came on the day of payment. An engraving (Fig. 88) taken from a very rare German incunabulum, *Der Ritter vom Turn von den Exempeln der godfordjt und erbeckeit*, shows a demon coming at the hour fixed to take delivery of a child promised him by its unnatural parents. The poor little creature's struggles are unavailing ; he is in a clutch not to be relaxed, and will never see his home again. His terror is easy enough to understand, seeing the hairy schoolmaster who will henceforth look after his education.

Fig. 88. A Demon carrying away a Child under the eyes of its Parents, who had promised it to him by Pact

Der Ritter vom Turn (Augsburg, 1498).

Innumerable persons who had either subjected themselves to demons by pacts or subjugated them by the arts of sorcery lived thenceforward in a state of uneasy familiarity with them. Cornelius Agrippa was constantly accompanied by two great dogs wearing necromantic collars ; they were really demons, we are led to suppose. Pietro d'Abano was condemned for having learned the seven arts—the *trivium* and the *quadrivium*—by the help of seven of these horrible creatures which he kept shut up in a bottle. The French historian, Palma Cayet, made a pact with the Devil by the terms of which he was always to be victor in his disputes with the Protestants ; the contract, signed with his blood, was found after his death. It was said that demons came and carried away his body, and although there actually was a funeral, the story runs that it was a sham one and that the coffin was filled with stones.

It was equally believed that Paracelsus had a demon shut up in the crystal pommel of his famous sword ; various authorities assert that Azoth was the name of the creature. A work by Paracelsus, *Astronomica et astrologica opuscula*, contains a very curious woodcut portrait of the author, engraved by Augustin Hirschvogel ; this does actually show Paracelsus with his hand on the pommel of his sword and the word [A]zoth written on the pommel (Fig. 89). From a perusal of his works, however—his *Liber Azoth* among others—it is easy to ascertain that Azoth was not a demon at all, and that Paracelsus used the word to designate the Vital Mercury

of the alchemists; I shall speak of this substance later. Another portrait of Paracelsus, by Nicolas Solis, gives complete conviction on this point (Fig. 90). It is in the *Archidoxa*, and shows the sword figured with the Mercurial hieroglyph. In case this sign should not suffice to enlighten the Church the artist has taken care to engrave the word VIRESCIT [1] above the pommel, thus indicating the vivifying and augmentative power of the enclosed substance.

Fig. 89. PARACELSUS
Paracelsus, *Astronomica et astrologica opuscula* (Cologne, 1567).
Author's collection.

The great ones of the earth, kings and even popes, engaged in sorcery quite readily. Without speaking of Popes Leo the Great and Honorius, to whom the *Enchiridion* and *Le Grimoire* were attributed, or of Gerbert, who became Silvester II, we must recall that the Spaniards accused Sixtus V of having sold his soul to the Devil in order to become Pope. Marcomir, the first of the hypothetical kings of France, once had recourse to a witch, and, according to the *Cosmographia universalis* of Sebastian Munster, she made a monster with the heads of an eagle, a lion, and a toad appear before him (Fig. 91). This royal tradition was continued by Catherine de Médicis and by her son, Henri III. These two devoted themselves to sorceries which were a scandal of the age and resulted in the publication of an anonymous lampoon entitled *Les Sorceleries de Henry de Valois et les oblations qu'il faisoit au Diable dans le Bois de Vincennes avec la figure des démons d'argent doré auxquels il faisoit offrande lesquels se voyent encore en ceste ville.* This

[1] "It grows."

effusion was destroyed by the supporters of the royal prestige, and it is consequently of marked rarity nowadays.

Fig. 90. Paracelsus
Paracelsus, *Archidoxa* (Munich, 1570).
Author's collection.

Henri III developed his taste for sorcery, according to this book, "after he had taken up with Saint-Mégrin, d'Epernon, and others—who caused Magicians and Sorcerers to come to him from various parts of the world—and with his other minions likewise who publicly, as men might say, professed sorcery (and truly this was common at the Court), and with many persons strayed from the Catholic Faith and Religion."

The keep of the castle at Vincennes was the place to which Henri III was accustomed to retire with his minions in order to carry out his furtive works. It is said, moreover, that the tower called the Tour de Paris was the actual scene of his operations, and this is shown in the foreground of the beautiful print by Sébastien Le Clerc (Fig. 93); but it may have been the Tour du Diable at the other end of the ramparts, facing the Tour de Paris. In any case, it is certain that "the dressed skin of a child" was found in the keep at the King's death, together with a curious object here shown (Fig. 92), of which the pamphlet referred to gives the following description:

Fig. 91. A Witch causing a Monster to appear before Marcomir, King of the Franks
Sebastian Munster, *Cosmographia universalis* (Basle, 1544).

> There were lately found two silver-gilt satyrs four inches high, grasping each one a great club in his left hand and leaning thereupon, and in the right upholding a bowl of pure and very shining crystal; the whole raised upon a moulded base borne on four sumptuous feet. In these bowls were unknown drugs which they had for oblations, and,

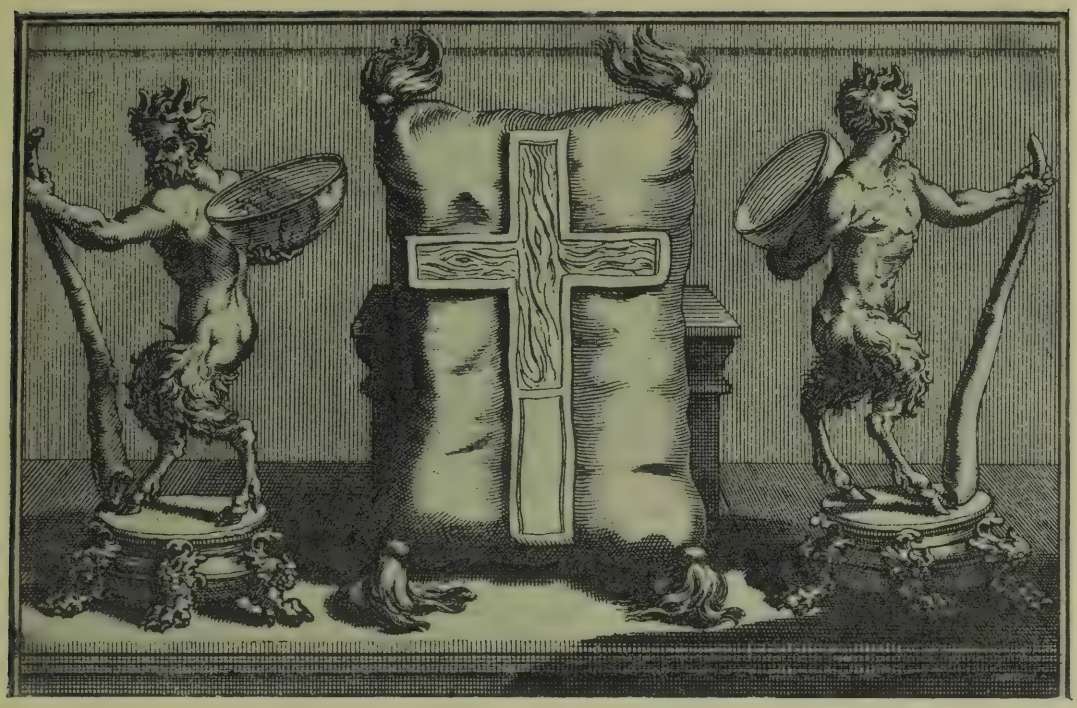


Fig. 92. Paraphernalia of Sorcery used by Henri III in his Satanic Operations
Les Sorceleries de Henry de Valois (Paris, 1589).
Author's collection.

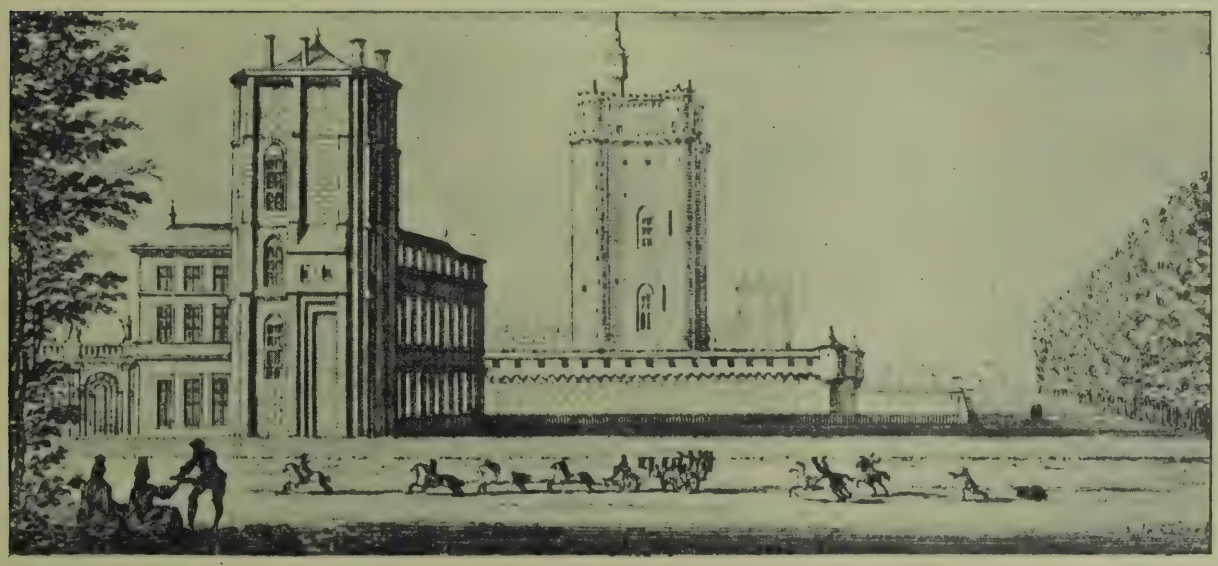


Fig. 93. The Castle of Vincennes and its Keep in the Seventeenth Century
Sébastien Le Clerc.
In the foreground is the Tour de Paris, where Henri III is said to have secluded himself to carry out works of sorcery.

> what is most hateful in this matter, these satyrs were before a golden cross, in the middle whereof was inlaid wood of the True Cross of Our Lord Jesus Christ. The men of political intrigue say that these were candlesticks, but from this is the contrary to be believed—namely, that in the bowls was no spike whereon might be set candle or little taper; be it considered, furthermore, that the beasts turned their backsides toward the said True Cross and that two angels or plain candlesticks would have been more decent than these satyrs. . . . These diabolical monsters are here in this city, in the hands of one, a person of honour and a good Catholic, who (when they had been viewed by the City Fathers) caused them further to be seen by a multitude of other persons.

Plainly, sorcerers had illustrious patrons, and it is no matter whatever for astonishment that the populace should have considered the sale of one's soul to the Devil an action of the most honourable kind, seeing that they had such exalted instances to influence their judgment.

X

SOME CONCRETE NOTIONS ABOUT DEMONS FURNISHED BY OLD AUTHORS

THE reader will certainly ask, with a perfectly legitimate curiosity, under what forms demons appeared when a skilful operator using the incantations of the books of magic had succeeded in forcing them to leave their gloomy dwelling-place.

Here again iconography affords powerful help.

The external aspect of demons has varied with the ages. In this matter, as in so many others, there have been fashions and customs. The pattern type we saw sculptured on the cathedrals underwent variations which form a very curious study in themselves.

In his *Histoires prodigieuses tirées de divers auteurs*, Pierre Boaistuau, a sixteenth-century author of whom La Croix du Maine has spoken in the highest praise, represents His Majesty Satan seated on his throne and supported by two censer-bearers; one of them is swinging his censer toward him with great energy, while the other impudently pulls his ear. The Devil does not seem to be much offended by the familiarity (Fig. 94).

Fig. 94. SATAN ON HIS THRONE
Pierre Boaistuau, *Histoires prodigieuses tirées de divers auteurs* (Paris, 1575).

Satan is shown in this picture with the strong taloned feet of some gigantic bird of prey; instead of hands, he has the cold claws of an alligator, sharp and scaly; he has a second, lower face placed in that position as if to deride the sacred saying of the *Table d'Emeraude*, "That which is on high is like that which is below"; and this hides the root of a ringed tail like that of an anteater which gives balance to his whole shape. His true countenance, lastly, has a tipsy, vulgar expression, and the

artist has followed up some absurd and perhaps cruelly malicious line of thought by giving him a Papal tiara as headdress.

Here we have the classic Devil. At the end of the evocation he could take his place again without incongruity under the arch-stones of any ancient provincial church.

Little by little the Master of Hell grows civilized. He becomes a man of the world, assumes the habits of good society, abandons his too savage nudity for clothing of velvet and silk, and becomes in the end what we see him in Goethe's sombre drama, the mocking and sarcastic Mephistopheles who is such a popular type in the theatre. The French librettists who adapted the story for Gounod's opera turned him into a great lord, " in short, a true nobleman," but Goethe merely intended him to be *gekleidet wie ein fahrender Scholastikus*—" clad like a travelling scholar "—and this is how he was represented with great exactness by Moritz Retzsch, one of the most authoritative of all the illustrators of *Faust*. In his album *Umrisse zu Goethe's Faust* he shows the Devil " with a sword at his side and a feather in his hat " and holding a fan made of a bat's wing. He is without the forked beard with which he is decorated nowadays, and his face is split in a pitiless infernal grin. This last detail apart, he is a most agreeable Satan, who could be introduced into the best society (Fig. 95).

Besides Satan himself, the considerable progress made by the science of demonology has rendered it possible to note with exactitude the individual physiognomies of many of the satellites of Satan.

These are, indeed, very well known. The notions we possess regarding the World of Darkness are of a strict precision quite unsuspected by the ordinary run of mortals. Some authors, expert at statistics, have not shrunk from the paradoxical task of calculating approximately the number of infernal spirits; among them may be quoted the famous Jean Wier, physician to the Duke of Cleves in the sixteenth century. According to him, the demons would number 7,409,127, commanded by seventy-nine princes. This figure is slightly amended in an anonymous book entitled *Le Cabinet du Roy de France*, which is attributed to Fromenteau and dated 1581. According to this, the sorcerers, having drawn up a very exact inventory and catalogue of the names of demons, would make the figures seventy-two princes and 7,405,920 demons. Various equally competent authors have given quite different figures. If we are willing to believe them there are six legions of demons; each legion comprising sixty-six cohorts, each cohort 666 companies; each company 6666 individuals. This comes to a total of 1,758,064,176 demons. It is a great many devils for a little planet like ours, and this alarming figure does really seem to be exaggerated; it exceeds the present population of the earth, which

is only 1500 millions, according to the best statisticians, and there would thus be more than one demon per head—one and sixteen-hundredths of a demon to be exact. Humanity is already bad enough; it would not resist the attacks of such powerful foes.

Fig. 95. Faust and Mephistopheles
Moritz Retzsch, *Umrisse zu Goethe's Faust* (Stuttgart, 1834).

According to a formula once much in favour, the exact number of demons was to be obtained by multiplying the Great Pythagorean Number by six—that is, 1234321 × 6—which gives us the much more reasonable total of 7,405,926 demons; this is fairly close to the estimates of Jean Wier and Fromenteau, and, all things considered, it is both fairly moderate and amply sufficient for the torment of humanity.

Every one of these demons answers to a name. If we do not know them all we at least know the names of the principal chieftains, which various writers have taken

care to leave us, and the catalogue of these is no less curious than the formulas contrived for estimating their number.

The Old Testament has acquainted us with Satan, regarded as the supreme head of the demonic tribe, and with Leviathan (mentioned by Isaiah), Belial, and the incubus, Asmodeus (the Apocrypha). To these the New Testament adds Beelzebub, named by Christ Himself, and Abaddon, or Apollyon, the Destroyer, the destroying angel of the Apocalypse, chief of the demons of the seventh dynasty. The Arabs placed the two black angels Munkir and Nekir in their Adhab-Algab, or Purgatory, for the torment of the wicked. They also speak of a terrible demon named Sachra Elmarid, who was chained by Solomon on Mount Dubavend.

In addition to these Christian demonologists are familiar with Baal, Pursan, Byleth, Paymon, and Zapan. Later on we shall find Père Surin, the exorcist of the Ursulines, calling upon Leviathan, Issacharon, and Balam, the demons of Loudun. The famous Ursuline Magdaleine de Mandols de la Palud, who was seduced by Abbot Gaufridy at the beginning of the seventeenth century by means of a charm which he carried enclosed in a walnut, had terrible fits of possession. When she was in the throes of these violent convulsions she revealed that Lucifer was the first of the Seraphim of the chief hierarchy, Beelzebub the second, and Leviathan the third ; St Michael was the fourth spirit created. She named twenty-four evil spirits who possessed her ; they entered her body in a string by the mouth and left it by the rear orifice.

The demons mentioned at the trial of Urbain Grandier answered to the names of Ashtoreth, Essas, Celsus, Acaos, Cedon, and Asmodeus, who are the fallen Thrones, and Alexh, Zabulon, Nephtalius, Cham, Uriel, and Achas, who are the distressed Principalities. Ashtoreth, Sabathan, and Axaphat were known to the Benedictine Dom Calmet. The Black-book adds, finally, Lucifugé, the Prime Minister ; Sataniacha, the Commander-in-Chief ; Agaliarept, and various others, such as Fleuretty, Sargatanas, Nebiros, Baal, Agares, Narbas, Pruslas, Asmon, Barbathos, Buer, Gusoyn, Botis, Bathim, Pursan, Abigar, Loray, Valefar, Poraii, Ayperos, Nuberus, and Glasybolas ; the extreme modishness of some of these names will be apparent !

As these various infernal spirits could be summoned by the formulas of the *Clavicule de Salomon* and the Black-book, it is not surprising that certain privileged mortals were able to make invaluable sketches of them in passing.

The English demonologist Francis Barrett, whose curious work, *The Magus*, I have already had occasion to quote, portrayed the countenances of various dignitaries of Hell whom it would be by no means pleasant to meet at night in the depths of a wood. He guarantees the exactness of these portraits, for he took care to draw

them himself, entrusting nobody with the execution of so delicate a task until he handed the finished work over to B. Griffith, his engraver. We see three of them in

Fig. 96. The Demons Theutus and Asmodeus, and the Incubus
Francis Barrett, *The Magus* (London, 1801).

the plate facing p. 128. The first is Ashtoreth (the Old Testament Ashtaroth), who has the classic head of the bandit-chief with whom it is possible to agree at the price of a heavy ransom; the other two are Abaddon and Mammon, mere sinister brutes

Fig. 97. OFFICIAL PORTRAITS OF DIGNITARIES OF HELL
Le Dragon rouge (Avignon, 1522 (1822)).
Author's collection.

from whom there would be nothing to hope if one fell into their clutches except to be pitilessly strangled. In Fig. 96 we see Theutus, who is not so terrible; he has the Verlainesque pug-nose of an inveterate drunkard. His companion Asmodeus has the look of a hideous and utterly intractable bull-dog. The mouth is like the jaws of powerful nutcrackers; it is shaped for nothing but barking and biting, and speaks plain death to anyone unwise enough to tease him. The third figure in the plate is the Incubus; he is a kind of comic opera charcoal-burner with so little that is terrible in his appearance that not even a girls' boarding-school would be afraid of him.

Harmless enough, too, are the little figures depicted in *Le Dragon rouge* (Fig. 97). They are the images—official, so to speak—of Lucifer, Beelzebub, Ashtoreth, and six other dignitaries. The designer seems to have amused himself at their expense by giving their heads a semblance of caricature—which might cost him dear if ever he found himself under the claw of any of the personages he has derided so agreeably!

Both *Le Grand Grimoire* (Claude's edition, Nîmes, 1823) and *Le Dragon rouge* claim that the Devil appears at the summons of the conjuror under the forms shown in Fig. 98. This demon—goat-footed like the Chief of the Sabbath, but decently clad in a jersey—is, it appears, the true Devil of the sorcerers, the Devil with three horns, one of which is twisted into a fantastic curl. It must be admitted that he has no very

intelligent look, which makes one dubious about his power of helping human beings, but as he is bearing treasures many will consider him fully intellectual.

It is only in the very middle of the nineteenth century that we definitely hit on the form assumed by the principal demons when they are evoked. A curious writer, Jacques Collin de Plancy, issued the sixth and definitive edition of his *Dictionnaire infernal* (published by Plon) in 1863. According to the title-page,

Fig. 98. The Devil bearing Treasures
Le Dragon rouge.
Author's collection.

Fig. 98A. The Devil bearing Treasures
Le Grand Grimoire (Nîmes, 1823).
Author's collection.

this work contains " the portraits of seventy-two demons drawn by Monsieur L. Breton, *after precise originals.*"

After this it would be grudging not to agree with him that Ashtoreth has the shape of " a very ugly angel " and rides a dragon, just as he was drawn (Fig. 99) by L. Breton, that surprising artist who had " precise " originals in his hands. Ashtoreth is holding a viper, the exact purpose of which is unknown to us. With his lop-sided mouth and his bent back, he has more resemblance to one of those horrible little usurers who fleece the sons of gentlemen by furnishing them with stuffed crocodiles than to a devil. But Jean Wier says that he smells nasty, which is enough to make him entirely distasteful to us.

Baal (Fig. 100), the first King of Hell, according to Wier, has three heads. One is the head of a man, and it is exactly that of the most extraordinary criminal lawyer

who ever frequented the Châtelet or the Tournelle at the time of the trials for sorcery ; the others are those of a good-natured toad and an honest cat belonging

Fig. 99. The Demon Ashtoreth
L. Breton.
Collin de Plancy, *Dictionnaire infernal* (Paris, 1863).

Fig. 100. The Demon Baal
L. Breton.
Collin de Plancy, *Dictionnaire infernal.*

Fig. 101. The Demon Belphegor
L. Breton.
Collin de Plancy, *Dictionnaire infernal.*

to a country spinster. The whole goes on a kind of bogie of tarantula-legs, allowing of very swift movement in any direction.

Belphegor (Fig. 101) is a demon enthroned on a close-stool ; he was the favourite

Fig. 102. The Demon Eurynome
L. Breton.
Collin de Plancy, *Dictionnaire infernal.*

Fig. 103. The Demon Amduscias
L. Breton.
Collin de Plancy, *Dictionnaire infernal.*

Fig. 104. The Demon Asmodeus
L. Breton.
Collin de Plancy, *Dictionnaire infernal.*

demon of the Moabites. He does not seem the sort of personage it would pay to evoke, but all the same he is less terrifying than his colleague Eurynome (Fig. 102), who sends a shiver up one's spine with his great teeth all ready for devouring, like the wolf's in *Little Red Riding-hood.*

But demons do not always appear in human shape. In many of the preceding scenes of sorcery we have seen them in the guise of animals, now fantastic, now ordinary. Dragon, he-goat, wolf, cat, and owl are the forms they chiefly favour. The half-human form is very usual, as we know; a man's head, more or less grimacing, combined with the indeterminate body of an animal. Olaus Magnus's *Historia de gentibus septentrionalibus* shows a witch, brandishing an *arthame* and a candle made of human fat, who has just called up a demon with a human head and double nose and the body of a winged dragon; another demon crouches beside the platform she is perched upon (Fig. 105). A dead man in the foreground appears to have been bitten by the serpent which the witch has killed by throwing a hammer at it. The he-goat of the Sabbath is found once more in the illustration taken from a little book entitled *La Poule noire*, dating from the beginning of the nineteenth century (Fig. 106). On this occasion, however, he is stylishly dressed in the French fashion. The operator is standing within a circle, and the treatise—which is a variant of the Black-book—prescribes that he must slaughter the black fowl seen lying at his feet in addition to performing the ceremonies previously described.

Fig. 105. Apparition of a Demon with Human Head and a Dragon's Body
Olaus Magnus, *Historia de gentibus septentrionalibus* (Rome, 1555).

The dog is a somewhat rare shape for demons to assume, and I know of only two examples. One of them is in Goethe's *Faust*, where the Devil appears in the form of a spaniel, who distends himself inordinately before turning into Mephistopheles; the incident is very well illustrated by Moritz Retzsch (Fig. 107). When walking in the fields accompanied by his disciple, Wagner, Faust met the dog running round and round and leaving a fiery track—*ein Feuerstrudel* ("fire-eddy") —behind it. The apparition was seen by Faust only, and when he returned to his house the spaniel followed him right into his study and began to snarl and howl alarmingly. "How tall and broad my spaniel grows!" cries Faust. "This is no longer the shape of any dog; what phantom have I brought into my house? He is already like a hippopotamus, and his eyes are blazing and his jaws terrifying. See how he fills all the room; he will dissolve in mist. Do not grow right up to the

ceiling!" And then Mephistopheles comes from behind the stove. "Why all this disturbance? What is needed for the gentleman's service?" says he; to which Faust, disappointed, replies: "Is this all that was inside the spaniel? a travelling scholar! Here's a thing to make me ponder!" The other example is taken from Cazotte's esoteric tale, *Le Diable amoureux*. The friends of the hero of this romance enclose him in a magic circle among the abandoned ruins of a monument at Portici, and involuntarily, as it were, he allows himself to attempt the evocation of Beelzebub. The plate shown in Fig. 108 is taken from the very rare edition of the romance published at Paris in 1845 and illustrated by Edouard de Beaumont; it shows the hero at the moment when the Devil appears to him in the shape of an enormous camel who asks him, "Che vuoi?"[1] "Come in the shape of a spaniel," replies the conjuror; and—reversing the *Faust* episode—a dog is the final result of the evocation. The story runs:

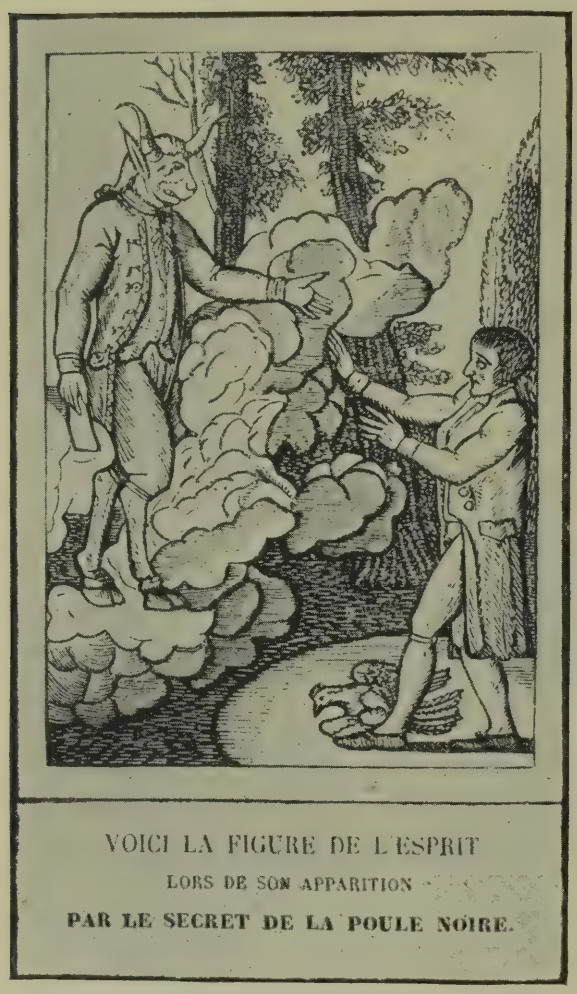


Fig. 106. The Devil appearing at a Cross-roads in the Form of a Goat
La Poule noire (1820).

> Scarcely had I given the order when the dreadful camel stretched out his neck to a length of sixteen feet, lowered his head to the middle of the room, and vomited up a white spaniel with fine shining silky hair and ears down to the ground. The whole vision disappeared, and nothing remained under the vault but myself and the dog. He walked round the circle, wagging his tail and fawning, and then said to me, "Master, I should greatly like to lick just the tip of your toes, but this terrible circle round you keeps me back."

At these words the conjuror jumped out of the circle and the Devil, still in the shape of a dog, performed most curious marvels.

To complete our enlightenment as to the animal forms assumed by demons, Collin de Plancy comes to our help once more by showing us Amduscias, who never

[1] "What do you desire?"

takes human shape (Fig. 103). He has a unicorn's head, almost no body, and the arms and legs of a man. Jean Wier tells us that when the celebrated Asmodeus—Asmedai of the Jews—responds to the invocation of Christians, he has three heads. M. Breton saw him and drew him (Fig. 104). His middle head is that of an ogre who delights in crunching up small children, the one on the left is like a bull's, and the right-hand one is a ram's. He is riding a dragon in order to economize the use

Fig. 107. Faust and the Spaniel
Moritz Retzsch, *Umrisse zu Goethe's Faust.*

of his legs, which are spindly and terminated by a small, webbed trident not at all convenient for walking upon.

But the finest of all these is Behemoth (Fig. 109), who carries around a belly like a pumpkin upon his bear's feet. He is topped by an elephant's head which likes to look at you sideways when it is not dealing you a hostile blow with its trunk. His name means, in Hebrew, " enormous animal," and in the Bible he presumably stands for the gigantic diluvian creatures which have since disappeared. This being so, it is not surprising that tradition should have preserved the memory of Behemoth as a clumsy creature and disgracefully corpulent.

The function of animals in sorcery is an extremely complicated one in other

respects. Sometimes their shape is taken by demons ; sometimes the witches and sorcerers themselves change into animals, as we saw earlier. One can never be certain, therefore, whether an animal is actually a demon or a witch or merely the indispensable accessory to some secret operation.

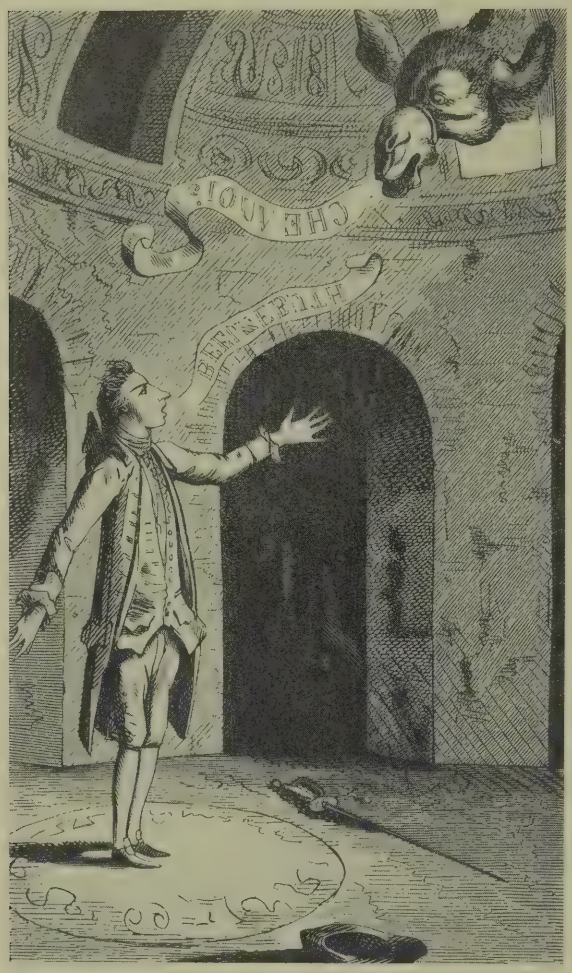


Fig. 108. Apparition of a Demon in the Form of a Camel
Cazotte, *Le Diable amoureux* (Paris, 1845).

We are indebted to the Révérend Père Guaccius for the scene in front of a witch's house shown in Fig. 110. A wolf and a cat (or a weasel) are waiting at the door ; the wolf is a demon, the cat a witch, unless it is the other way about. All the creatures in the picture, including the giant snail crawling toward the hillside town, are perhaps demons in disguise.

The owl seen in attendance upon all witches has no very definite province, but the toad is one of the shapes assumed by a demon when he sits upon a witch's left shoulder. Thanks to the two tiny horns borne on his forehead, a toad was recognizable as a demon, and witches took infinite care of him. They baptized their toads, dressed them in black velvet, put little bells on their paws, and made them dance. There is a skewerful of these animals hanging in Doctor Faust's study, as Moritz Retzsch depicts it (Fig. 95).

Cats too held an important place in sorcery, principally black cats, which were, and still are, regarded as demons incarnate or transformed witches. It is on this latter count that in recent centuries peasants all over Europe made hecatombs of black cats, thinking thus to destroy the witches they accused of having bewitched them. It follows quite naturally that every graphic representation of an episode of sorcery should include a cat. We may distinguish particularly a very rare print by Franz van der Wyngaert (Fig. 111). Here the part played by cats is very odd and not unaccompanied by cruelty.

In the foreground several animals returned from the Sabbath are chanting incantations. One of them is reading from a Black-book ; another, in derision, from a

book of plain-song. A hideous witch lying in a pallet bed, with a crow perched on her head, is also singing, but without book. Another woman crouched before the fireplace is making responses, reading from a parchment. In the middle of the picture a crippled sorcerer is playing a truly diabolical instrument; it is a sort of clavecin, made in imitation of one presented to Louis XI by a certain monk, but here consisting of a case enclosing eight cats—the octave—with only their heads and paws protruding, in the style of a keyboard. The jeering and self-satisfied player presses on the paws to make the cats squall symphonically. Behind the instrument another man is pulling the tails of the cats so as to produce a different set of sounds from them. The whole thing is well calculated to produce a horrible cacophony, the demoniac character of which is clearly marked by the presence of the owl perched on the sorcerer-musician's chair and of the bat hanging by its claws from the cross-bar of the same chair-back.

Fig. 109. The Demon Behemoth
L. Breton.
Collin de Plancy, *Dictionnaire infernal.*

Fig. 110. Demon and Witch changed into a Wolf and a Cat
Guaccius, *Compendium maleficarum.*

This composition seems to be inspired by the dismallest dementia. It holds important rank in the iconography of sorcery as one of the most disturbing evidences of a state of mind entirely remote even from us, and happily never to be known by future generations.

Witches sometimes transformed themselves also into harpies or vampires, the classic type of which can be seen reproduced in the *Hortus sanitatis* of Johannes de Cuba. This was translated into French (Paris, A. Vérard) about 1498. They were birds with human faces "which nevertheless were no way human," says this author. Harpies ate continually without being able to glut themselves, and would devour any kind of flesh, but especially that of men. They were found in great numbers on the shores of the Black Sea, and although the Europeans of that day did not

frequent the neighbourhood much, and so had mostly never seen any of them, their mention by Virgil in the *Æneid* was enough to establish their incontestable reality.

Fig. 111. Reading the Black-book
Franz van der Wyngaert. Early seventeenth-century print.
Author's collection.

XI

INVOLUNTARY DEMONIACS

SATAN and his companions are odd creatures who—not surprisingly—are filled with the most complete spirit of contradiction. While endless sorcerers exerted themselves to call up some demon or other who obstinately refused to appear—for my readers will be able to satisfy themselves unaided that success is far from crowning every experiment if they care to risk putting into practice some of the formulas given in this book—many persons, on the other hand, who by no means wanted to see the Devil found themselves exposed to his determination to visit them without their having performed the least evocation or surrounded themselves with any shadow of a magic circle.

These 'involuntary sorcerers' are so numerous in history that if one gathered up all the chronicles relating facts of this sort they would run into several big volumes.

We know about the philosophic and theological colloquies Luther held with the Spirit of Darkness, in which the Reformer did not always get the upper hand—so far from it, in fact, that one day he threw his inkpot at Satan's head; the famous blotch of ink is still visible on the wall of the room. Louis Guyon reports the following fact in his archaic style: "Lycosthenes writes that he returned to Rotwill [Rottweil] in Germany, in the year of grace 1545, when that the Devil was seen at high noon going and walking to-and-fro about the market-place; whereat the townsfolk were a-dread, fearing lest he might burn the whole town as elsewhere he had done."

It was under the shape of a blackbird that the Devil spoke to St Benedict, if the *Dialogues* of St Gregory the Great are to be believed in the matter. The devilish bird fluttered about before the eyes of the pious recluse, pestered him with enticements, and would not go away until the Saint made the sign of the Cross; even then he left most potent temptations behind him. Sometimes he would consider a woman's form preferable, as witness Gregory of Tours, who narrates, in his *Historia Francorum*, how Euparchus, Bishop of Auvergne in the Merovingian era, one night found his church full of demons with their chief dressed like a woman and seated on the episcopal throne.

The rare German incunabulum *Der Ritter vom Turn von den Exempeln der godfordjt und erbeckeit* contains a quantity of short tales in this kind, illustrated by

Fig. 112. The Devil causing Women to babble during Mass
Der Ritter vom Turn (Augsburg, 1498).

engravings at once witty and naïve. In Fig. 112, which is one of them, we see a demon with a head like a burglar's jemmy and bulging eyes present at Mass said by a pious hermit in the cryptal chapel of some German monastery. Three tattling women compose the congregation, and to these at the moment of the elevation the demon is insinuating the whispered suggestion of an inexhaustible stream of gossip on frivolous and unseemly subjects. Later on two other demons (Fig. 113), in analogous circumstances, are taking down in shorthand on long strips of paper everything said by these three gossips, who, so far from thinking of the Sacred Sacrifice, are telling one another all the talk of the town or pitilessly backbiting their women neighbours. One of the demons sees his parchment filling up, and is tugging at it savagely to make it stretch. The parchment rips, and the demon will end by banging his head against the wall in wrath.

Fig. 113. Demons noting down the Babbling of Gossips during Mass
Der Ritter vom Turn.

Fig. 114 shows a demon of greater audacity carrying a joke very much farther; the crudity of his act is wholly medieval. The Thuringian or Swabian coquette has taken her richest finery out of her chest, and is looking in the mirror while she combs her beautiful hair. The demon is playing antics behind her as she does it, and caps them by displaying his backside to her; she sees it reflected in the glass, to her great astonishment, when she naturally reckoned on seeing herself there.

The misogynous theologian of the period hastens to draw the ferocious conclusion that the painted face of a fashionable woman is uglier, in the eyes of God, than a demon's backside. And thus was she punished, says he, this frivolous woman who would spend a fourth part of her day before her mirror!

But never was anyone more victimized by the hopelessly misplaced hoaxes and practical jokes of demons than a certain M. Alexis Vincent Charles Berbiguier de Terreneuve du Thym, a person of property born at Carpentras. In 1796 he left his native town, and settled first in Avignon and afterward in Paris. Here he experienced unheard-of adventures which he narrated at full length in the three volumes of his autobiography *Les Farfadets, ou tous les démons ne sont pas de l'autre monde* (Paris, 1821).

Fig. 114. Disrespectful Conduct of the Devil to a Frivolous Woman
Der Ritter vom Turn.

"Beelzebub, the supreme chieftain; Satan, the dethroned prince; Eurinome, prince of death; Moloch, prince of the Land of Tears; Pluto, prince of fire; Pan, prince of the incubi; Lilith, prince of the succubæ; Leonard, grand master of the Sabbaths; Daalberith, high pontiff, and Proserpine, the arch she-devil"—all of them set upon him cruelly. But his peculiar accomplishments enabled him to detect that these maleficent spirits had representatives in France, and he instances "Moreau, a magician and sorcerer at Paris, the representative of Beelzebub; Pinel senior, a physician at La Salpêtrière, the representative of Satan; Nicolas, a physician at Avignon, the representative of Moloch; Prieur senior, a drug merchant, the representative of Lilith"; and so forth.

From 1813 to 1817 M. Berbiguier remained in Paris at the Hôtel Mazarin, 54 Rue Mazarine, and during all that time demons never left off appearing in his room. They accompanied him in the street, and followed him over the Pont-Neuf or the Pont-au-Change. If he entered the church of St Roch he would suddenly find himself surrounded by goblins (several of them females) and "parafarapines," as he was pleased to call them. He went one day to Professor Pinel's house, 12 Rue des Postes, near the Estrapade. To his horror, M. Pinel had sold his soul to the

goblins and was a goblin himself. He went and tormented M. Berbiguier at the Hôtel Mazarin, entering, like a true sorcerer, by the chimney of his room. M. Berbiguier went to the house of the Grand Penitentiary of Notre-Dame to make confession; even there goblins accompanied him. Neither the First Restoration nor the Hundred Days daunted the goblins one whit, or made the least difference to their persecution of the wretched M. Berbiguier.

For the rest, he illustrated his work with lithographs which are far too curious and convincing for me to resist the pleasure of reproducing them here, together with the explanations appended by himself.

"The first lithograph," he says,

> represents my portrait [Fig. 115], in which I thought I ought to adopt the qualification of "Scourge of the Goblins." The four corners of the design are decorated with a bullock's heart stuck with pins, two pieces of sulphur arranged saltire-wise, some aromatic plants, and some papers of needles and pins. Below me is seen my dear Coco, a victim of elfishness

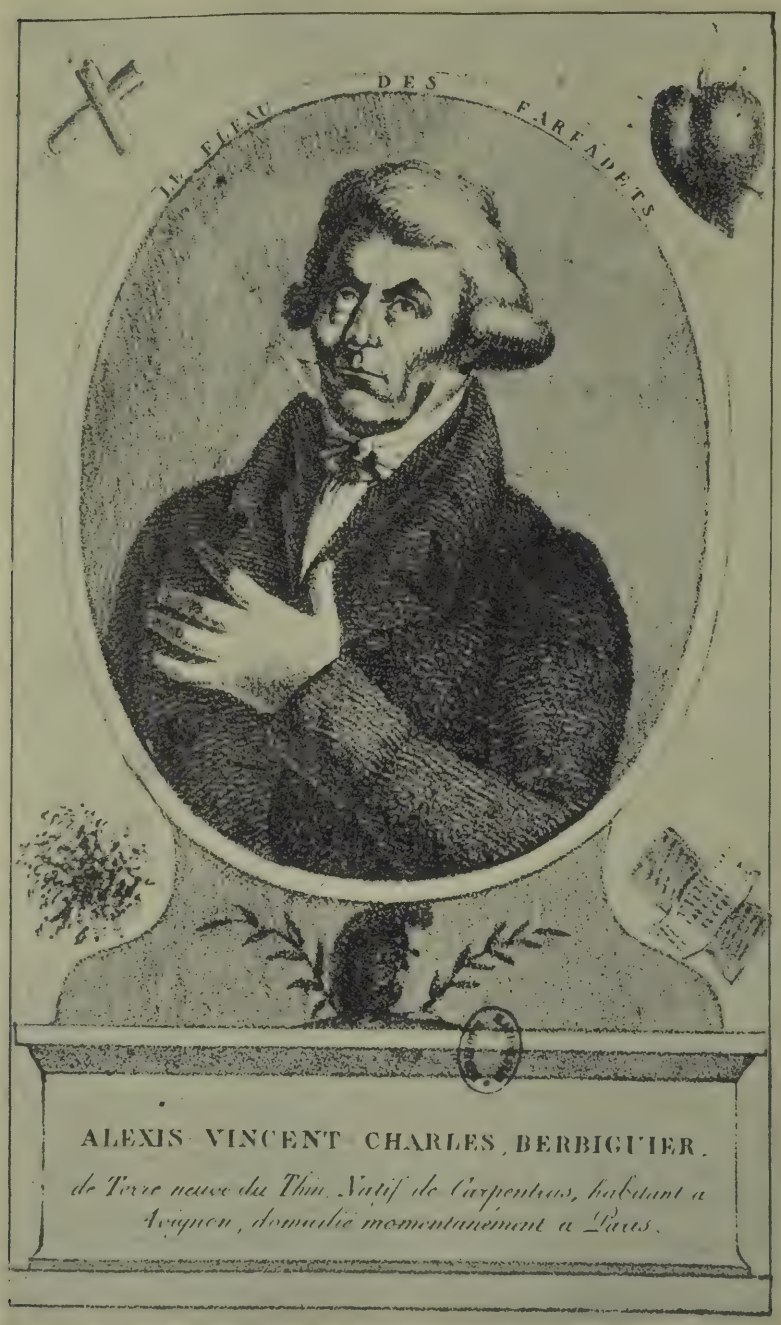


Fig. 115. M. Berbiguier
Les Farfadets (Paris, 1821).

and my faithful friend. [Coco was a little squirrel which Professor Pinel-the-Goblin wickedly came and killed, in order to cause M. Berbiguier pain.]

The second [Fig. 116] represents an interior where Jeanneton la Valette and La Mançot are playing the tarot game for me. This was the moment when I was put under the influence of a malign planet. Two goblins, disguised as a monkey and a bat, are inspiring the evil natures of the two sibyls.

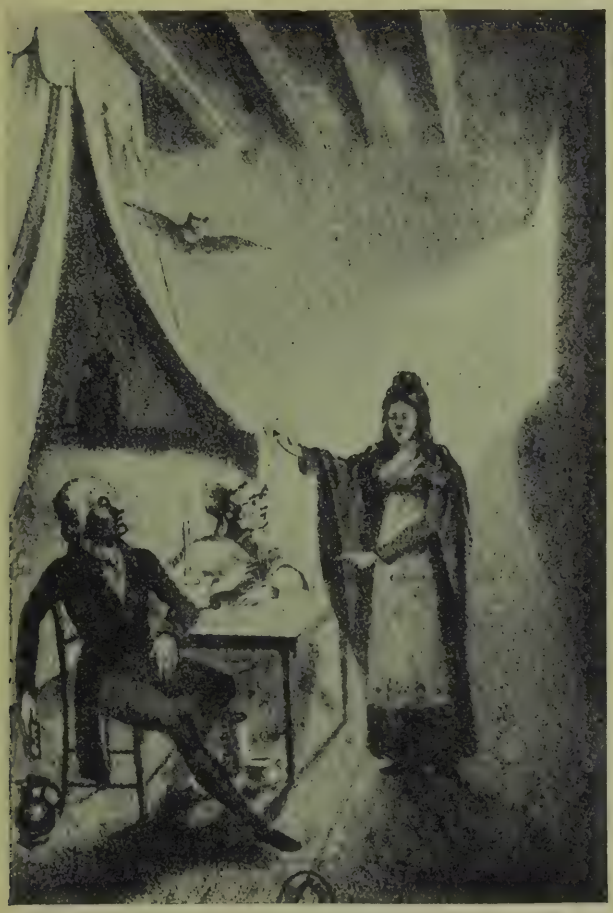


Fig. 116. M. Berbiguier consulting the Tarot through the Medium of Two Cartomancers, who bewitch him

Les Farfadets.

Fig. 117. Rhotomago and the Goblins suggesting that M. Berbiguier shall enter their Fellowship

Les Farfadets.

The third [Fig. 117] represents Rhotomago, followed by a strong body of goblins, who are coming to set before me the proposal that I should enter their accursed fellowship. I am repulsing them indignantly. The Holy Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ is before my eyes. Some little invisible goblins would like me to turn my gaze from it; they are frightened when their eyes fall on a bottle which imprisons some thousands of their infernal army. Rhotomago does not dare to use his fork against me.

The fourth [Fig. 118] shows the scene I had with a fireman when I was carrying out medicinal operations in order that the festival day of our good King might be illumined

by an unclouded sun. [M. Berbiguier had burned some sulphur in his room to drive away the goblins, and the neighbours, thinking there was a conflagration, had summoned the firemen.]

The fifth [Fig. 119] illustrates the moment when I am occupied in preparing the aromatic plants which I am to burn in performing my medicinal operation. The interior is that of the modest chamber I am occupying in M. Gorand's house, the Hôtel Guénégaud. I have

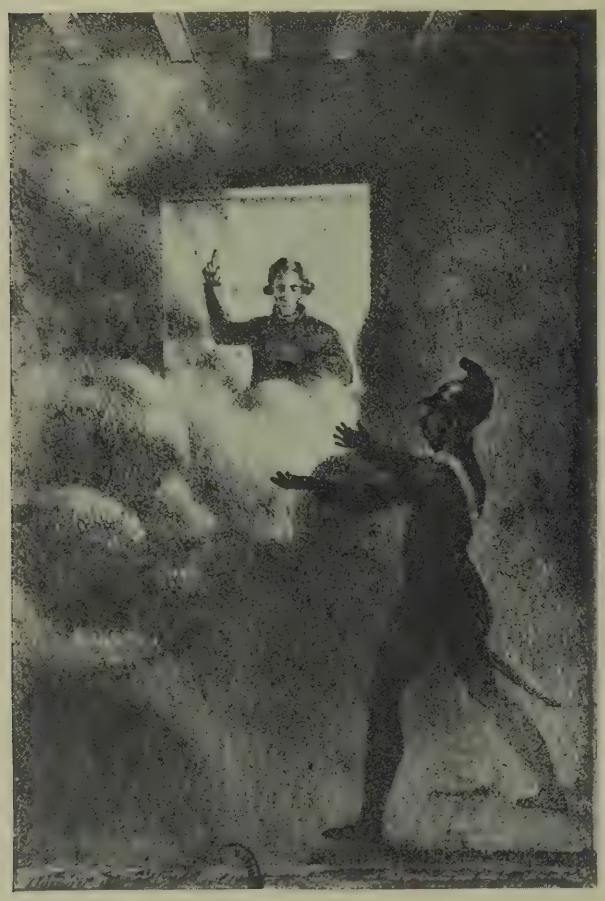


Fig. 118. Dramatic Scene between M. Berbiguier and the Fireman
Les Farfadets.

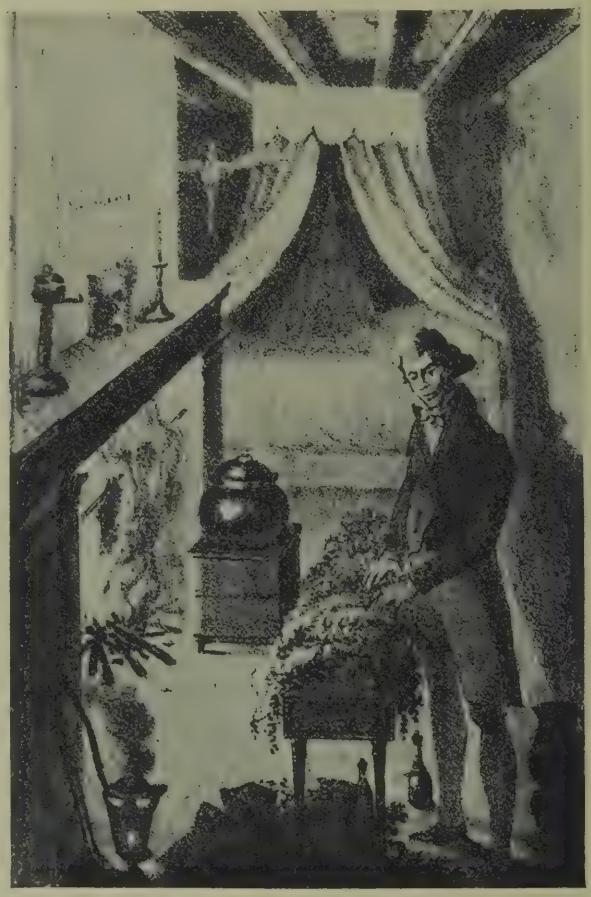


Fig. 119. M. Berbiguier burning Aromatic Plants to drive away Demons
Les Farfadets.

always detested splendour ; my furniture is as simple as my person. On very scrupulous examination of this lithograph it will be found to show a few goblins who are watching me and would like to prevent me from attending to my operations.

The sixth [Fig. 120] shows me continuing my preparations for the anti-goblin medication. I am seated at the corner of my fire and near a table on which I have placed aromatic plants, needles, pins, sulphur, salt, and other things. . . . A bottle filled with captive goblins is also placed on the table. I am looking at my prisoners provokingly, but the wretches are powerless to harm me. M. Pinel, armed with a fork and accompanied by a strong body of invisible goblins, would very much like to frighten me, but nothing can disturb the serenity of my feelings. M. Étienne Prieur (a law student), disguised as a pig, cannot

withstand the odour of my anti-goblin plants; he is vomiting up what he has perhaps just eaten at the house of another of his victims.

The seventh [Fig. 121] portrays the concourse of goblins presided over by Beelzebub with a fork in his hand. Rhotomago is seen sitting before him awaiting his orders. Among the other goblins present at the infernal congress one can distinguish MM. Pinel, Moreau, Chaix, and Étienne Prieur (still disguised as a pig), who are complaining of having

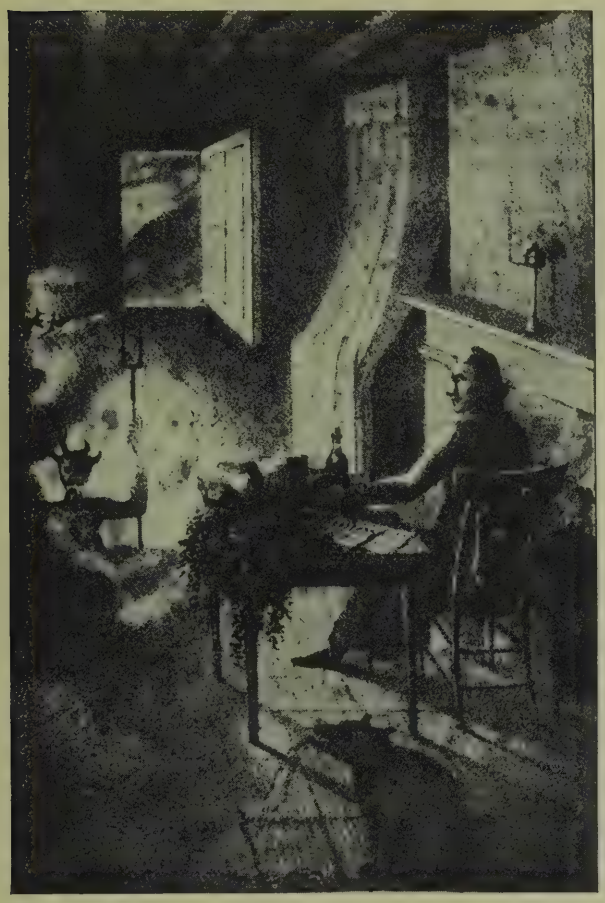


Fig. 120. M. Berbiguier, the Bottled Goblins, and M. Pinel
Les Farfadets.

Fig. 121. The Concourse of Goblins presided over by Beelzebub
Les Farfadets.

been pricked by my needles and pins. Chaix is awaiting Beelzebub's order to go to and fro upon earth and in Hell.

The eighth and last [Fig. 122] is a representation of the effect of the goblin scapegoat. The skin of a he-goat, which has been placed in the centre of the least gloomy hall of Hell, is inflated by a demon, with the help of a pair of infernal bellows. The infamous Belphegor of Hell presides over this diabolic device; he is armed with the magnetized wand made use of by MM. Bouge and Nicolas, at Avignon, to bring me under their influence. The goblins are jumping upon the goat, which jerks them up to the clouds, where the infamous Rhotomago is waiting for them to perform a conjuration upon the weather. The goblins who are spectators of this abominable scene are those who have been

condemned to inaction by the decree of the Supreme Council of Hell. Among them are Jeanneton la Valette, La Mançot, and La Vandeval. All the symbols surrounding this lithograph are goblin symbols.

I do not believe that anything exists as extraordinary and precise as these three volumes. I refrain from passing any judgment on them and decline to

Fig. 122. The Goblin Scapegoat
Les Farfadets.

outline them. I advise the reader to run through the whole of these twelve hundred senseless and bedevilled pages, and agree beforehand with the opinion he will have formed of them when he has done it.

All this apart, if demons show themselves less often in modern life—and without doubt they find it far too much cumbered with mechanisms, means of rapid locomotion, and telephone appliances to be to their liking !—they have nevertheless not completely forsaken it. But they seem to confine themselves to certain rather inaccessible spots where their tranquillity is rarely disturbed by the visits of the curious. Among such places are the ruined castle near the town of Utrecht, where

demons are said to forgather on the thirteenth of every month, St Patrick's Cave in Ireland, the cave hard by the castle of Carnoët in Finistère, or the monument known as Pierre de Couhard at Autun.

This last is situated outside the town, at the side of a road leading to the hamlet of Couhard. I give a view of it, after a very pretty eighteenth-century watercolour now preserved in the Bibliothèque Nationale at Paris (Fig. 123). It is a kind of quadrangular pyramid of stones, somewhat shapeless, and said to be of Roman construction. The exact purpose of it is unknown. The face of the pyramid fronting the road is pierced by a vast circular hole. The second smaller opening seen in the illustration must have fallen in since, or perhaps never existed; in any case, no trace of it can be seen to-day.

Fig. 123. The Pierre de Couhard at Autun, which contains a Demon

Eighteenth-century watercolour.
Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale; Estampes Va 190.

The depth of the existing hole cannot be sounded. At certain hours of the day it emits clamorous sounds and a noise of violently shaken chains. The inhabitants of the district say that it is the abode of a chained demon. I myself have several times heard the truly infernal racket, but the monument is so hemmed in with brushwood, boughs, wild plants, brambles, and nettles that it is impossible to climb as far as the opening, so that I was obliged to leave this mystery unexplained, like so many others.

It must be recognized that in their relations with men demons have not invariably merely taken a wicked delight in playing nasty tricks upon them or making them the subject of dubious jokes; they have sometimes been exceedingly serviceable to them. Many persons have seen demons come to help them at their job, or even perform it entirely by themselves. In the Middle Ages demons frequently found their way into houses and did the housework, prepared the vegetables, set the pot to boil, turned the spit for the roast, and changed the babies' underclothes—to the great astonishment of the occupants, who found their house in order and the work done when they returned home. Demons would come stealthily by night to finish off the test-piece of workmen who were in a fair way to becoming master-craftsmen, but who could not complete their task; they would draw plans for architects puzzled over the erection of some cathedral, and often they would even help materially in building it.

The little illustration (Fig. 124) taken from Olaus Magnus's *Historia de gentibus*

septentrionalibus shows, on the left, a demon with a remarkably pointed nose and a dorsal crest like the blade of a saw commendably brisk about the work of some miner, probably thrown up in discouragement by the latter. Another demon—in the centre—sweeps out the stable, gives the horses fresh straw, and fills their mangers, while the stablemen, forgetful of their duty, have gone off to the pothouse. On the right a third, proud of his office, is steering a ferry-boat in which four passengers are seated ; he is manipulating the stern-oar with one hand and making a favourable wind blow with the other. The wind issues from a big cloud as if from a projector. Higher up a fourth demon is drawing some other travellers along through the sky in a waggon, which has left the unendurably ploughed up and miry terrestrial roads for a flight in the air three and a half centuries before aviators dared adventure in that dangerous element.

Fig. 124. Demons carrying out Various Works useful to Man

Olaus Magnus, *Historia de gentibus septentrionalibus.*

We see what invaluable helpers demons were for those disinherited generations, lacking as yet the potent adjuncts to hand-work which steam and electricity have become.

When the charming upper chapel (the Kaiserkapelle) of Nuremberg Castle was being built in the twelfth century Père Cyril, the chaplain, caused the Devil to bring him the four columns of white Milan marble which form its chief ornament. The Devil—who has his awkwardnesses, just like an ordinary workman—let one of them fall and break ; that is why one of the columns is in two pieces while the other three are monolithic. It is proper, also, to recall the famous Deil's Dyke which formerly parted England and Scotland, and was so massive that all the inhabitants of the region held it by common consent for the work of demons. The wall surrounding the castle of Vizille, near Grenoble, likewise has its legend. The Duc de Lesdiguières, Constable of France, gave the Devil the order for it ; the Devil asked the Constable's soul in exchange. They agreed, however, that if the Constable had time to get out of the wall next morning before it was completely finished he should be fully discharged from his debt. An army of demons instantly set about the construction of the nine-mile length of wall, working round the two opposite sides. Just at the moment when the two parties were about to meet, the Constable jumped the wall on horseback at full gallop. His horse's tail was caught

Fig. 125. The Bridge at Saint-Cloud, built by the Devil
Print after Courvoisier (eighteenth century).

Fig. 126. The Pont de Valentré at Cahors, built by the Devil
Lithograph by Eugène Gluck (1850).

in the masonry, and the rider freed himself by cutting it off with his sword. They still show an imperfect join in the wall which, so they say, encloses the tail.

But above all it was in the construction of bridges that demons intervened when architects and engineers found themselves at an end of their resources. Many a structure in Europe bearing the name of the Devil's Bridge has a legend of this nature woven into its history. There are many such in England and Spain. The *Teufelsbrücke* in Germany are exceedingly numerous, and there is a famous one at Einsiedeln in Switzerland, beside the house in which Paracelsus was born. In France the bridges of Beaugency, Pont-de-l'Arche, Vieille-Brioude, Orthez, and many others were built with the powerful help of demons. The most beautiful, perhaps, of the ancient bridges of France, that called the Pont de Valentré at Cahors, was constructed entirely by the Devil, who certainly made it a masterpiece. I give a view of it after a pretty lithograph of the Romantic period (Fig. 126).

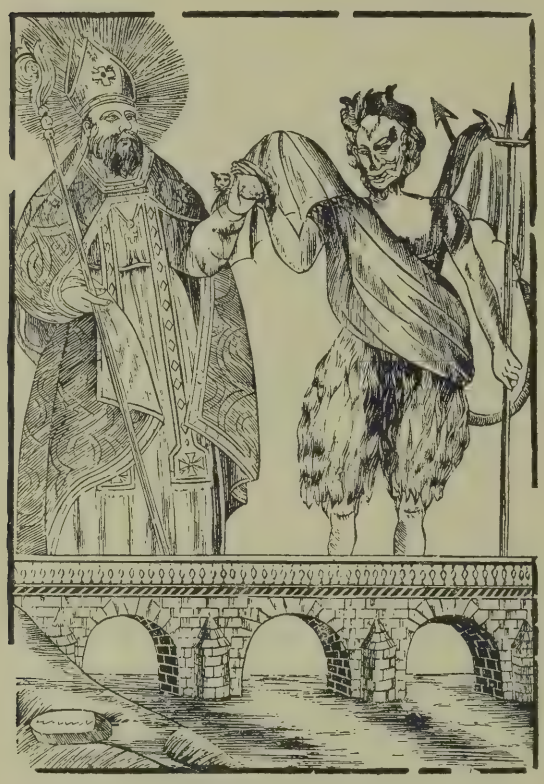


Fig. 127. St Cado giving the Devil a Cat in Exchange for the Construction of a Bridge
Popular print.
Perret (Rennes, 1855).

The bridge of Saint-Cloud, near Paris, is an honest bridge; it leads to the famous park and to the typically Parisian *fête*, and electric trams run tranquilly over it—who would believe that it is the work of Satan? This pleasant print after Courvoisier (Fig. 125), dating from the end of the eighteenth century, shows its placid aspect. As the price of his toil the Devil—as he almost always does on such occasions—demanded the soul of the first creature who should cross the bridge when it was built. The inhabitants of Saint-Cloud had a happy thought: they would see to it that a black cat was the first to cross. So was it done, and Satan, thus cheated, had to content himself with this meagre prey.

This trick was current in other places, and it seems that the Devil very often resigned himself to such a price. In a popular print of the nineteenth century (Fig. 127) we see a venerable bishop, St Cado, clad in his episcopal vestments and holding his crosier, giving Satan a cat instead of the soul of a Christian in exchange for the bridge built by him, the arches of which are seen at the foot of the picture.

Fig. 128. Ironwork of the Doors of Notre-Dame at Paris, executed by the Demon Biscornet

Fifteenth century. Photograph taken before 1856.

Author's collection.

Before the restoration undertaken by Viollet-le-Duc a remarkable example of work done by the Devil was to be seen at the cathedral of Notre-Dame in Paris.

The front of this cathedral has three doorways, and the doors of those to the right and left were adorned with wrought ironwork which was the wonder of all those of most noted skill in the ironworker's art. This ironwork was extremely complicated and delicate in workmanship. It spread over the whole surface of every door—twenty-two feet by thirteen—and it was impossible to perceive any break in the continuity, any trace of brazing or welding, or a sign of any kind of join whatever. It follows that each sheet of convoluted iron was in a single piece, and it was supposed that it had all been cast, then wrought while red-hot, and finally finished off with a file when cold. This was a gigantic work, and only the Devil was capable of it—the more so as he had the fire of Hell at his disposal, and no ironworker's forge could compete with that. Here were good reasons for the confident assertion that the work was in very truth executed by a demon named Biscornet, and this opinion was supported by the presence of several little figures in relief, capped by two horns, on the transverse bands of iron; these were said to be portraits of the demon himself, put there by way of signature.

Moreover, the following legend was repeated. A journeyman ironworker, having presented himself for admission as master-workman of his guild, was set the task of making the ironwork for the doors of Notre-Dame by way of test-piece. He found this work was beyond his skill, whereupon a demon appeared before him and offered to do it in his stead if he would sell him his soul. The workman agreed. The next day the four doors of the right and left doorways were finished, but the demon Biscornet avowed himself incapable of doing those of the middle doorway, because it was through them that the Holy Sacrament passed during processions. So the workman was freed from his promise to the Devil, but he kept the four doors already done nevertheless and was admitted master-workman.

This ironwork no longer exists. About 1860 Viollet-le-Duc replaced it by more or less faithful copies in which the Devil had no hand at all, but by good luck I possess a photograph of the old ironwork taken just before its replacement; a reproduction of it is given here (Fig. 128). By its help the curious can make comparisons with the existing ironwork, and will easily verify the various differences.

XII

POSSESSION BY DEMONS

DURING the Middle Ages and right down to the eighteenth century people were often regarded as sorcerers when in reality they were merely possessed of one or more demons.

It sometimes happened, besides, that witches would put so much energy into their evocation of the Devil that, instead of becoming their obedient servitor, he would forcibly take possession of them.

It would even seem that the great classic witch, she whose impressive figure dominated the whole of Christendom because she was accorded a place of honour in the Old Testament—the Witch of Endor, first in date and most famous of them all—may have belonged to the category of witches under possession.

She was a necromantic witch, as we shall see further on (Fig. 142). According to the Biblical narrative, King Saul caused his servants to seek her out so that she might make the prophet Samuel appear before him. The reader should turn to 1 Samuel, chapter xxviii, for the whole sombre story. In the Hebrew text the exact words are: "The servants of Saul said to him, There is at Endor a woman *Behalath-Ob*"—a rather vague expression which may be interpreted in two different ways. The Greek translators rendered the word *Ob* by the term "python," which means dragon, serpent, or evil spirit. *Behalath-Ob*, then, signifies either "mistress of a python," *Domina Pythonis*—that is to say, "having a python in her possession"—or, again, "wedded to a python," and consequently "under the power of a python"; and this interpretation is very consistent with the spirit of the Hebrew language.

Possessed by a python or possessing a python? Most theological commentators have preferred 'possessed'; they have even fixed upon the belly as the lurking-place favoured by the demon and classified the Witch of Endor as a ventriloquist.

'Possession' was the expressive appellation by which mental perversions of a certain character were indicated. Such perversions—historically innumerable—almost never correspond with any apparent or latent organic lesion.

The possessed person is convulsive when affected by the mysterious and invisible influence, which tortures him, impels him to violent and brutal actions, and makes him burst out howling. He can be delivered only by certain special prayers. Scenes of possession are mentioned in the Gospels, and traverse the whole extent

of the Middle Ages in lives of saints and annals of the religious Orders. They were witnessed by all the places of pilgrimage and famous basilicas, and at Ars,

Fig. 129. Possessed Woman blaspheming at the Beginning of the Paroxysm
Abraham Palingh, *'t Afgerukt Mom-Aansight der Tooverye* (Amsterdam, Andries van Damme, 1725).

Fig. 130. Possessed Woman trying to throw herself out of the Window
Abraham Palingh, *'t Afgerukt Mom-Aansight der Tooverye.*

Lourdes, and Paray le Monial, as well as in the recesses of various convents. Possessed persons are still sometimes seen shrieking and struggling under the sway

Fig. 131. Possession during a Protestant Sermon
Abraham Palingh, *'t Afgerukt Mom-Aansight der Tooverye.*

Fig. 132. Possessed Man begging his Family not to denounce him to the Magistrates
Abraham Palingh, *'t Afgerukt Mom-Aansight der Tooverye.*

of the hurtful fluid which has invaded their whole being and impregnated their substance.

No more exactly characterized scenes of possession are to be found than those shown in the exceedingly rare work by Abraham Palingh from which I have already reproduced an illustration, *'t Afgerukt Mom-Aansight der Tooverye.* This

book consists of a long discussion upon the facts of sorcery and demonic possession ; the discussion is in dialogue form, and the interlocutors are sorcerers named Tymon, Eusebius, and Mantus. One of the illustrations in the book shows a witch, attacked by a sudden demonic seizure, going into a convulsion in the midst of a council of

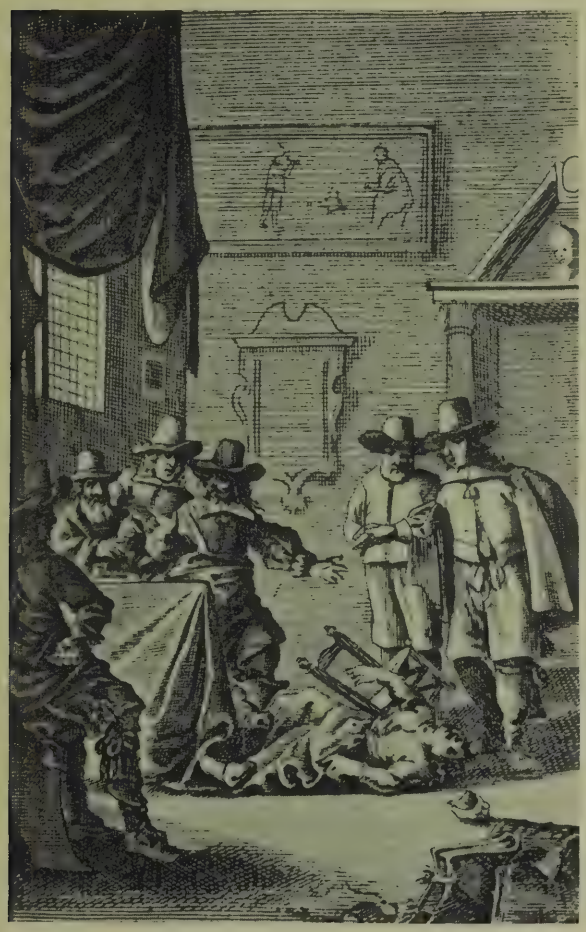


Fig. 133. Witch's Fit of Possession in the Midst of a Council of Aldermen
Abraham Palingh, *'t Afgerukt Mom-Aansight der Tooverye.*

Fig. 134. Fit of Demoniac Fury, with Twisting of the Bodily Members
Abraham Palingh, *'t Afgerukt Mom-Aansight der Tooverye.*

aldermen who have summoned her to appear before them in order that they may reprimand her for her conduct (Fig. 133). She is struggling convulsively on the ground and has pulled over a chair in her fall. In another scene of the same nature the witch—or she may be merely a possessed woman innocent of witchcraft—is in the throes of the seizure known as a fit of demoniac fury (Fig. 134). She is foaming at the mouth, and her feet and wrists are twisting and contorted, which was held by the theologians to be an undeniable symptom of bodily possession by one unclean demon or many. The modest interior shown in Fig. 129 displays the terror of a

group of Dutch housewives at hearing the blasphemies uttered by a possessed woman into whom a demon has just entered. Fig. 130 shows the trouble more good folk of the sort have in preventing another possessed woman from throwing herself out of the window under a Satanic impulse which she cannot resist. Another scene takes place in church during a Protestant sermon, where a man suddenly falls backward off his bench, to the great scandal of his neighbours, because the demon inside him was unable to bear hearing the ineffable words read from the Sacred Book (Fig. 131). Shortly after this same man, the fit having passed over, is kneeling to his family, friends, and neighbours imploring them not to denounce him to the magistrates, who would inevitably sentence him to the dreadful doom reserved for sorcerers (Fig. 132).

In his celebrated *Dialogues* St Gregory the Great recounts, in the most naïve fashion, a very curious instance of possession. While walking in the garden of her monastery at Rome a nun was taken with a desire for a lettuce ; she pulled one and bit it, forgetting to ask a blessing upon it, and was instantly possessed of the Devil. They sent for Father Egnitius, who was famous for his exorcisms, and as soon as he arrived the demon began to speak in a whimpering voice. " What have I done ? " said he. " I was seated upon this lettuce [*sedebam ibi super lactucam*] ; this woman took it and bit into it ! " By prayers and conjurations the holy man forced him to leave the body of the nun.

We come now to a stranger and more involved instance of possession. In the Vyšehrad Church at Prague, in Bohemia, a priest named Wazlaga Kralizzec ordered a demon to leave the body of a possessed man and offered him his own in exchange if the demon could go to Rome straight away and bring him back a column from the church of Santa Maria in Trastevere before the introit of the Mass. The demon went off and brought back the column, but the priest had finished the Mass by then and was reading the last Gospel. Out of spite the demon dropped the column, which broke into three pieces and killed several people, but he left the body of the possessed man. This column, nearly twenty feet long, is still to be seen in the church ; an ancient fresco painted on the wall above it portrays the details of the occurrence. The story is thrown into strangely bold relief by the presence in the church of Santa Maria in Trastevere at Rome, six hundred miles away, of sixteen columns like those in the Vyšehrad Church ; these stand on one side of the nave, but on the opposite side there are only fifteen of them. An altar stands on the site of the missing column, and it too bears an ancient fresco illustrating this extraordinary tale.

When demons installed themselves as masters in the bodies of the possessed they afflicted them with countless unbearable pains, and the supreme art of the Christians

consisted in knowing how to dislodge them from their borrowed residence. Certain possessed, like the one spoken of in the Gospels, concealed legions of demons within themselves, and it was no easy matter to force absolute garlands of demons to stream out of the natural openings of the body in single file.

The prayers by means of which unhappy creatures thus tormented were freed from demons were called exorcisms. It is clear enough that they were frequently employed in former times, since the Church readily separated the functions of the exorcist from the other sacerdotal functions, and enrolled him in one of the four minor orders allocated to those who were specially charged with the duty of carrying these murky citadels by storm. Soon even these specialists were unable to cope with their task any longer ; they were overwhelmed by the flood of cases. Thereafter every one ventured into exorcism without troubling about orders ; even women—St Catherine of Siena is a marked instance—devoted themselves to the dangerous work.

The Church has included exorcisms in every page of her liturgy. They are manifested in the ceremonies of blessing water, salt, and buildings, and in the baptismal rite, which itself is only a long exorcism. The infant is born possessed. Its entry into this world is made under the auspices of a demon. That is the very doctrine of the Church ; see, else, how she hurls blasting imprecations straight at the Devil in the course of this ceremony. " I exorcise thee, thou unclean spirit ! " says the priest. " Exorciso te immunde spiritus ! Go thou far from this servant of God ! Come out of him ! Exi ab eo ! Hear thy doom, O Devil accursed, Satan accursed ! " and so on. Such are the preliminary words, by no means generally known, of the sacrament of baptism. Now, if they do not express an indisputable truth, and are nothing but a vain and pompous formula, why pronounce them at all ?

Sentences of exorcism designed to make demons flee from the bodies of the possessed were innumerable, and their infallibility was always guaranteed. Some of them are collected in an old book, *L'Ordo baptizandi*, published at Venice by the house of Ægidius Regazola in 1575. Apart from baptismal exorcisms, the book gives the exorcism of St Ambrose, beginning with the words *Omnipotens Domine Verbum*, and the exorcism called *Luciferina*. The latter is very specially recommended, remarks this respectable tome ; it is *conjuratio pulchra contra dæmones*.[1] Besides these there were the exorcism of St Cyprian and that read at St Peter's in Rome before the column of the Flagellation of Christ, which began with the words *Adjutorium nostrum*.

In 1582 the Révérend Père Hieronymus Mengus issued two collections of exorcisms under the title *Flagellum dæmonum exorcismos terribiles complectens* and

[1] " An excellent conjuration against demons."

Fustis dæmonum, but his book was put upon the *Index*. No doubt monastic rivalry and considerations of internal discipline account for this step, since a century later, in 1678, a canon of Antwerp, Maximilian ab Eynatten, published a *Manuale Exorcistarum*, just as full as its predecessors and giving formulas extracted from the Romish ritual and from the Mechlin Pastoral, which escaped the Papal censure. We find from this book that the priest would lay his stole upon the possessed person, or perhaps read the Gospel of St John over his head. Further, he would even pronounce exorcisms for sick animals or worn-out husbands reduced to a regrettable impotence by the malice of Satan. Another volume of the same nature had appeared in 1663 at Fribourg, in Switzerland; it was published by the house of David Irrbisch under the title *Nucleus continens Benedictiones rerum diversarum, item exorcismos ad varia maleficia expellenda*. It contains exorcisms applicable to water, wine, salt, repasts, incense, sulphur, perfumes, medicinal substances, potions, salves, baths, beds, houses, clothes, herbs, roses, rue, wormwood, ships, flocks and herds, vines, and even silkworm cocoons (*Benedictio seminis bombicum*). They are all intended to do the same thing—that is, to dislodge the evil spirits hidden in these various substances. Then there are exorcisms against worms, mice, and snakes, and against bewitched food, which are invariably pronounced in the name of Jesus Christ and St Ubald—*in nomina Jesu Christi et Sancti Ubaldi*. Among other odd conjurations the book contains the following: *In nomina Pa ✠ tris et Fi ✠ lii et Spiritus ✠ Sancti! ✠ Hel ✠ Heloym ✠ Sother ✠ Emmanuel ✠ Sabaoth ✠ Agia ✠ Thetragrammaton ✠ Agyos ✠ Otheos ✠ Ischiros ✠*, and so forth, which has a singular resemblance to the formulas of the Black-book.

Lastly, many little devotional usages—the sign of the Cross, holy water, rosaries, scapulars, St Benedict badges, and other talismanic objects in use among Christians—are nothing but everyday exorcisms for repelling demons, as also is the custom of putting the hand before the mouth in yawning or even making the sign of the Cross over it with the thumb so that no evil spirit may dare enter.

Prayers of exorcism are certainly what St James is pronouncing when he finds himself brought to a stand before a magician by the swarm of demons which that person has called up (Fig. 135), and again when the Lord has granted his request that the demons may seize upon the possessed magician, hurl him from his chair, and tear him in pieces (Fig. 136). But Breughel the Elder, to whom we owe these two remarkable prints—engraved by Cock in 1565—has forced his habitual imaginative note. By a joyous anachronism which none but a Fleming would permit himself he has made witches on their broomsticks figure in the scene, and has peopled it with nightmare gnomes and myrmidons escaped from the ooze of prehistoric earth, with the result that no documentary value can be attached to these striking fantasies.

Fig. 135. St James before the Magician, surrounded by Demons
Print by Breughel the Elder (1565).

Fig. 136. Demons tearing the Magician in Pieces at the Order of St James
Print by Breughel the Elder (1565).

Much more sober and veracious is the print by Callot, after Andrea Boscholi (Fig. 137), showing a possessed woman struggling in a church. Two massive and muscular young men are having great difficulty in holding her; a crowd surrounds her; a priest is calmly and unostentatiously reading the exorcismal prayers, and a choir-boy hides behind him holding the basin of holy water. In the background is the altar prepared for Mass, which will begin as soon as the scandalous scene ends.

Fig. 137. Exorcism of a Possessed Woman
Engraved by Jacques Callot after Andrea Boscholi (seventeenth century).

Exorcisms are still practised in these days, and have even been retained in various dissenting branches of the Catholic Church. I have in my possession a very curious English etching (Fig. 138), engraved in 1816 after a drawing by Stephanoff, representing a scene of exorcism. The action is taking place at the beginning of the nineteenth century and in the United Kingdom—a country which yet flatters itself upon having banished diabolism from its theology and conversation. In order to increase the effect of terror in the scene, the artist has not shown the exorcised subject at all, but all the personages are turned toward him in attitudes at once comic and horrified. The scene appears to be taking place in the private chapel of one of those old mansions in the north of England so dear to Ann Radcliffe. In the background some half-dressed people are tumbling down an oaken staircase in a tumult, and an owl is putting out their candle. A manservant has seized some kind of a weapon—it may possibly be intended for a tall candlestick—in order to scare the evil spirits. A woman and two children are crowding together in a compact group near the clergyman, who is reading prayers from his manual

of exorcism. He seems so little reassured that one must assume he has but a moderate confidence in his prayers. A light is held for him by a trembling old manservant with his hair standing on end, who is on the point of dropping the censer which he holds in his right hand. Another person is ringing a bell, which completes the alarm of the household. Every one—down to the dog—is feeling some degree of disquiet in beholding a spectacle to which the supernatural element has lent the

Fig. 138. Exorcism
Print by Stephanoff (London, 1816).
Author's collection.

dread of the unknown. [But the dog does seem to have retained enough presence of mind to steal a leg of mutton from a tray left on a chair.

It is no easy matter to drive demons out. They resist and cling on, obstinately refusing to leave a dwelling-place which seems to their liking. They have to be dislodged by prayers, and sometimes by fumigations. Occasionally even their invisible substance solidifies suddenly and resolves itself into the perceptible as filth, excrement, toxins, or intestinal rumblings. This is why possessed subjects, when the demon issues from them, often vomit dung, coals, or reptiles, and why, when the plant called Barath (the discovery of which is still attributed to Solomon) is administered

to them, the demon flees in the guise of a spider, a bat, steam, or noisome smoke, or *cum fœdo vomitu,*[1] or even *cum fœda sanie ex ore,*[2] as the theologians hold. Here is the reason, too, why the ancients stigmatized witches as "stinking" (*fœtentes*), and why apparitions of the Devil traditionally give off a smell of sulphur.

Various trustworthy ecclesiastical authors have brought a proved competence to the task of elucidating these matters. One such is Père Crespet, a sixteenth-century Celestine monk who refused a bishopric offered him by Gregory XIV; he wrote *Deux livres de la hayne de Sathan et malings esperits contre l'homme.* Another is the Jesuit, Pierre Thyræus, who published at Lyons in 1603 a bulky volume entitled *Demoniaci, hoc est de obsessis a spiritibus dæmoniorum hominibus.* This work may fairly be called definitive; it treats the question of obsessions at ample length with admirable clarity and on very healthy principles. The author is sagaciously discerning in identifying those parts of the body which demons infest by choice and those by which they enter or leave. He caught some of them slipping into human bodies along with food and drink and others who, having taken possession of the bodies of women, were expelled with pangs like those of childbirth, *via verecunda.*

Fig. 139. A Demon's Flight from the Body of a Possessed Woman
Pierre Boaistuau, *Histoires prodigieuses* (Paris, 1575).

In a book previously quoted, the *Histoires prodigieuses tirées de divers auteurs* of Pierre Boaistuau, there is a picture (Fig. 139) of a demon leaving the body of a possessed woman which shows a bishop administering the Eucharist. The woman's mouth is forcibly opened to receive the consecrated wafer, and the unclean spirit is leaving her under the form of a little demon with claws. It is these little ones that are the most pernicious, so competent authorities say.

But no account of exorcisms is so detailed and convincing as that left by the Révérend Père Surin. He was a Jesuit of eminent piety and perfect simplicity of heart who wrote various books and composed a number of edifying canticles. Richelieu sent him to the Convent of the Ursulines at Loudun to exorcise the demons who had taken possession of it. He entered upon a conflict with the powers of

[1] "In a filthy vomit."

[2] "In a filthy, corrupted bloody issue from the mouth."

evil which lasted several years, and the extraordinary account of his adventures written by himself is admittedly impressed with a very marked accent of truth.

He had predecessors in his onerous task, but they had only dislodged three demons who had elected to dwell in the bodies of three nuns. Père Jean Baptiste Gault, of the Oratory, drove out the demon Asmodeus on May 29, 1629, and he took the signal precaution of making the demon write and sign a deed in due

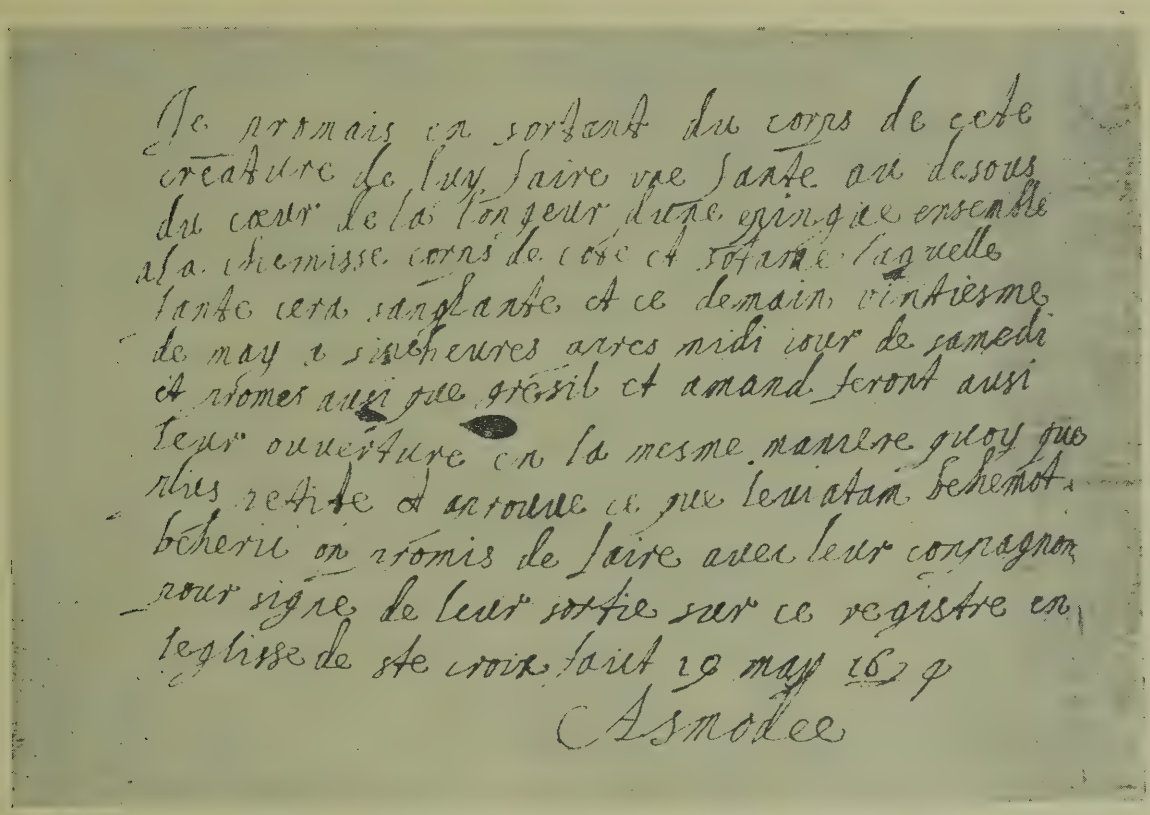


Fig. 140. Autograph signed by the Demon Asmodeus
Bibliothèque Nationale, manuscript *fonds français* No. 7618, f. 20, verso.

form attesting the event. I have provided illustrations which enable my readers to examine two different aspects of the earthly appearance of Asmodeus (Figs. 96 and 104), and it was this demon who affixed his five separate signatures to the document mentioned. He, Père Gault, the Sieur Martin de Laubardemont, and Monseigneur Henry Loys Chasteigner de la Roche-Pozay, Bishop of Poitiers, all signed on the same page. The precious document is entered at the Bibliothèque Nationale under the manuscript *fonds français* No. 7618, and as it would seem that few people know how demons write I give a faithful reproduction of this authentic autograph of the demon Asmodeus (Fig. 140). The following is the purport of this document :

> I promise in issuing from the body of this creature to make a slit the length of a pin below her heart and through chemise, bodice, and cassock together, the which slit shall be bleeding, and this upon the morrow, Saturday, the twentieth [? thirtieth] of May, at five o'clock in the afternoon; and I promise also that Gresil [a demon] and Amand [another demon] will make each his opening in the same manner, although smaller, and I ratify what Leviatam, Behemot, and Beherie [demons] have promised to do, they and their companion, in token of their issuing, upon this record made the twenty-ninth of May, 1629, in the Church of the Holy Cross. ASMODEUS

The handwriting is feminine and quite pretty. Some critics have ventured to laugh at the sight of this document, on the pretext that it contains errors of spelling and that a demon, as they assert, ought not to make them. This objection has no weight. I would invite these critics to observe that in the seventeenth century there was no spelling—or, rather, there were no rules of spelling. At least, if there were any, printers, scriveners, and M. de Vaugelas were alone in observing them; a person of quality would have considered himself dishonoured in doing so. Louis XIV perpetrated errors, and so did Mme de Maintenon. Mme de Sévigné, the Grande Mademoiselle, Bossuet, Saint-Simon, and Cardinal Richelieu bedecked their writings with solecisms which an elementary school child of to-day would be capable of detecting. Moreover, the *Dictionnaire* of the Académie was not yet issued, and every one devised an orthography of his own. Why, therefore, should demons—who, it will be agreed, were also persons of quality—have observed any grammatical rules when by doing so they would at once have placed themselves beneath a mere squire without any honourable addition to his name?

The ejectments mentioned, however, were too slow. Père Lactance, who followed Père Gault as exorcist, did not succeed, I believe, in expelling a single demon in the course of three or four years. The heaviest part of the work remained to be done, for not one of the numerous demons possessing the Mother Prioress had consented to leave her. Sterner stuff was needed for this superhuman task, and so Père Surin, who had just been selected for that end, undertook to dislodge them one by one. He achieved his aim after an obstinate struggle, and in spite of the many risks he ran at the hands of his powerful, unseen foes. "So I entered into the exercise of my charge," says he, "upon the day of St Thomas the Apostle, in the year 1634," and the result was not long in showing itself. On June 23, 1635, a fresh devil was driven out, according to the same manuscript, No. 7618 of the Bibliothèque Nationale. Folio 56—which is badly damaged and seems even to bear traces of a scorching due to hell-fire—contains the oath, "To-day, the 23rd of June, I promise, I, the sworn foe of the Virgin, in leaving this body to make as token of my flight an opening upon the right hand a finger-breadth in largeness which will appear two weeks."

And the anonymous demon has signed himself " An Enemy of the Virgin." Seven days later it was the turn of Nephtali to sign the record of ejectments :

> I promise, I, Nephtali, to do thus in leaving this body as a veritable mark of my flight. I promise, namely, with great regret, to smash the cathedral pulpit of the Vicar of Loudun whence he preaches all his muddled heretical laws and to carry the said pulpit from that place by breaking a way through the roof thereof. In witness whereof I, Nephtali, have executed this deed the 30th day of June, 1634.

A year later the Révérend Père Surin wrote to Père d'Attichy, a Jesuit of Rennes :

> I am in a perpetual intercourse with demons. For three months and a half I have never been without a demon at work hard by me. When I desire to talk my speech is stopped ; at Mass I am brought up short ; at table I cannot put a morsel of food into my mouth ; and I feel the Devil coming and going about me as in his own home.

The demons who were in possession of the Mother Prioress revealed to him that they were seraphim and cherubim and fallen thrones. They were named Leviathan, Balam, Isacaron, and Behemoth. Isacaron fought with the Prioress, Balam set her off into peals of laughter during offices and prayers, and, more serious still, Behemoth stirred her to quite unseemly thoughts. Another demon named Zabulon possessed Sister Claire ; he had resisted the exorcisms of Père Surin's predecessor, Père Lactance, to whom the Bishop of Poitiers had entrusted the important task of expelling him.

The saintly Jesuit had to undergo some violent assaults in the campaign he undertook against these mysterious adversaries ; several times he was possessed himself. " Once," says he, " the demons devised a horrible charm by the power of which the Mother Prioress became quite other than she really was for the space of eight days ; her countenance became of a rare beauty." He adds that " On another day the demon, assuming my shape, entered the parlour and in a gentle voice, like mine, talked to the Mother with the intent of leading her astray." After this there was an interminable series of adventures, sometimes grotesque, sometimes tragic and agitating. The demons whipped the nuns and terrified them with horrible outcries. Sometimes they bestowed the gift of tongues upon them, and then the most unlettered would suddenly begin to discourse in Latin.

" One day when I was practising upon Behemoth," the good Father says,

> he suddenly flew into an amazing rage, the greatest I ever beheld him in, in such sort that I deemed him about to issue forth. He avowed to me that he was guarding three consecrated wafers which three magicians, two at Loudun and one at Paris, had managed to keep for themselves during the Communion. I conceived a strong desire to possess these wafers, and thus I bade Isacaron go straightway to Paris, and Balam also. After dinner

> Isacaron returned in a vast fury, and straight was followed by Balam, who showed himself in the countenance of the Mother. I asked him if he had done what I commanded him ; he answered yes, and that he had brought the wafers.

Later on the demons alleged

> that the Mother Prioress was with child, and in plain fact there was every appearance of it. But upon the day of the Circumcision in the year 1635 the demon said that the Holy Virgin had forced him so to do as that the Mother should cast up all the humours which were causing the seeming pregnancy. So it was that she vomited them during the exorcism within the space of two hours, whereof several persons of quality were witness, and among others the Bishop of Nîmes.

The first demon the Révérend Père Surin succeeded in driving out of the Mother's body was Leviathan. As he fled he left a red cross upon her forehead, in accordance with what he had promised the Bishop of Poitiers. Then it was Balam's turn, and afterward Isacaron fled in 1636, leaving on the Mother's hand, in full sight of every one, the sacred name Maria in Roman letters. They were graven deeply into the flesh, and the name of St Joseph accompanied them in smaller characters. To conclude, Behemoth offered a more prolonged resistance and did not leave the patient until October 15, 1637. Thenceforward everything at Loudun went along in an orderly manner, and Père Surin and the Prioress made a pilgrimage together to the tomb of St Francis of Sales, to thank the Lord for this toilsome deliverance.

XIII

NECROMANCY, OR THE EVOCATION OF THE DEAD

ITHERTO we have considered only those processes of sorcery which are confined to the direct relations of mankind with the Devil.

But besides the sorcerers whose boast it was that they could summon the Devil, there were necromantic sorcerers who did not shrink from disturbing the eternal slumber of the dead, from commanding them to rise from their sepulchre to come and reveal the secrets of the future which they must have learned during their stay in the other world.

These were the more terrible. There is nothing very dreadful about seeing the Devil, and a violently stimulated curiosity feels no apprehension in satisfying itself; but there is something sinister in the mere fact of seeing the dead appear. Here the etching is blackened beyond all bounds, and the boldest must shudder at the inevitable gruesomeness in which the scene is set. So we shall be descending more deeply still into the murky abyss which the human intelligence has delighted in seeking to explore for centuries past and has not yet abandoned the hope of penetrating.

The first and most illustrious of witches—ancestor, mother, model, prototype, and flawless exemplar of all medieval witches—that venerable pythoness, the Witch of Endor, who was mentioned in the last chapter, she was a necromancer. Her special mastership lay in enforcing the appearance of the dead; we see it in the fact that she had no difficulty in making the Prophet Samuel come out of his tomb. Prophet or no, he could not escape the dark power of that diabolic woman. Although this Biblical scene stirred the imagination of our forefathers profoundly, it has not often inspired artists. Its cold horror gave no scope to such as Breughel or Callot for the successful exercise of their comic energy, and in the eighteenth century it gave birth to only a few pictures in which the rhetorical tragedy of convention could not conceal the lack of any note of authenticity.

An Augsburg draughtsman, Johann Heinrich Schönfeld, interpreted the evocation of Samuel in a print engraved by Gabriel Œhinger, reproduced in Fig. 142. In the angle of a mortuary monument an emaciated witch is holding in her left hand a torch which lights up the whole scene with a sinister glare, and in her right a vervain twig, with the tip of which she is touching different parts of a magic circle. The hierograms traced on the circle are too sketchily indicated to be legible, but one can guess that they are very closely related to those employed in circles designed for evoking

demons. An owl, a toad, and a snake are moving at large about the circle in the neighbourhood of a bovine skull. Saul, bent under the weight of his soldierly equipment, is prostrating himself before Samuel, who rises slowly from his tomb. Some mysterious force is raising the tombstone. Various subordinate witches are gathering—one straddles a sarcophagus on the top of the monument—and watching the scene curiously.

Necromancy was most assiduously practised in the Middle Ages. It consisted either in making the dead appear or, if they were recalcitrant, in exhuming corpses and examining them. The procedure followed in the examination has not been precisely defined. In Spain necromancy was taught at Seville, Toledo, and Salamanca, in deep caverns which were at length walled up by Isabella the Catholic. The witches of those parts lay under the additional imputation of eating human flesh. In his famous *Compendium maleficarum* the Révérend Père Guaccius gives an illustration (Fig. 141) in which these practices are very well indicated. In the foreground we see two sorcerers withdrawing a corpse wrapped in a winding-sheet from the peace of its grave ; farther back four witches are engaged in cutting up a corpse lying on a table prior to indulging in one of those horrible repasts we have already seen depicted in Figs. 32, 46, 47, and 51. In the background a malefactor hangs from the beam of a gibbet, and a sorcerer of gigantic stature is cutting the rope in order to carry the corpse to the deathly feast. These sinister gatherings are evidently the object of that famous article in the Salic Law (Title XLVII, Article III), otherwise difficult to interpret, which reads thus : " Si stria hominem comederit, et convicta fuerit, VIII denariis, qui faciunt solidos CC, culpabilis judicetur." [1] And then there is the article in Reginon de Prum's *De Ecclesiasticis disciplinis et religione christiana*, which deals with " carmina diabolica, quæ super mortuos nocturnis horis ignobile vulgus cantare solet." [2]

Fig. 141. Sorcerers exhuming the Dead in a Cemetery

Guaccius, *Compendium maleficarum*.

The most interesting print I know of relating to necromancy is an eighteenth-century English engraving by Ames, after a drawing by Sibly ; it bears the inscription, " Edward Kelly, a magician, in the act of invoking the spirit of a deceased person." A fresh engraving of this, done in masterly style by an anonymous artist,

[1] " If a witch shall have eaten a man and shall be convicted thereof she shall be condemned to pay eight [thousand] deniers, which make two hundred sous [gold]."

[2] " Diabolic songs which the common herd uses to sing at night-time over the dead."

Fig. 142. The Witch of Endor evoking the Prophet Samuel
Johann Heinrich Schönfeld (seventeenth century).
Author's collection.

was used as the frontispiece to Mathieu Giraldo's *Histoire curieuse et pittoresque des sorciers* (Fig. 143). This is not mere imagination; it rests on a basis of historic fact. The two sorcerers who have just attempted the evocation of the spirit of a dead person with such success that they have made it rise from the earth in front of a tomb, its body wrapped in a shroud and its head enswathed, are, respectively, Dr John Dee, astrologer to Queen Elizabeth, alchemist, mathematician, and geographer, and Edward Kelly, a fantastic creature who bore the imputation of imposture, but was certainly a medium exercising a considerable influence over John Dee. Kelly—holding the wand and book—is the effective agent in the evocation; Dee, beyond dispute more learned than Kelly in all branches of knowledge, but lacking in initiative and less daring than he, contents himself with holding the torch which lights them and appears to be horrified at the result attained. Kelly seems very little disturbed by it and remains completely master of himself. The circle in which they are standing is very like those shown in Figs. 74 to 80; the words "EO," "Raphael," "Rael," and "Rex" are plainly legible within it. The accompanying crosses and anchors indicate that the evocation of the dead was performed in exactly the same manner as that of the Devil, with the sole difference that the dead person's name was substituted for the Devil's.

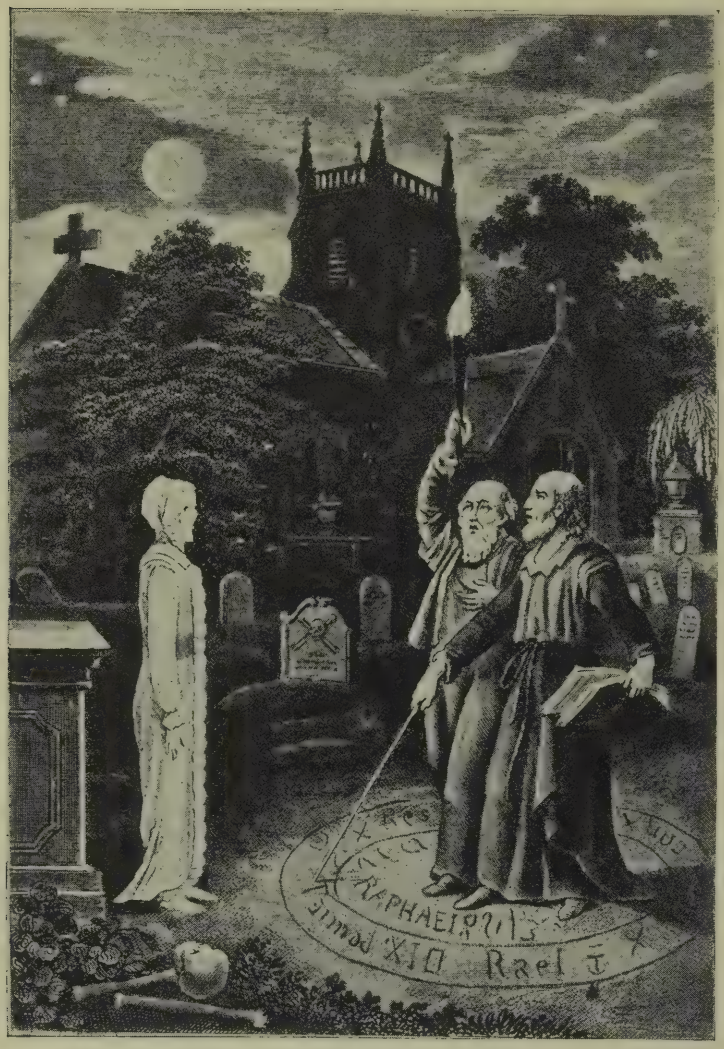


Fig. 143. Dr John Dee and Edward Kelly making a Dead Person appear in an English Cemetery
Mathieu Giraldo, *Histoire curieuse et pittoresque des sorciers* (Paris, 1846).

It is not easy to determine in what period of John Dee's career this evocation can be placed. Although he left a diary or private journal of his life—which was a rare

thing in the sixteenth and even in the seventeenth century—it does not appear that he mentioned this adventure. It is certain that he occupied himself with the evocation of demons in the towns of Cracow and Prague, whither he had taken Edward Kelly, and he gave a detailed account of these operations in his book, *A True and Faithful Relation of what passed for Many Years between Dr John Dee . . . and Some Spirits*, which appeared in 1659, but this is not concerned with the evocation of the dead. On the other hand, the graveyard in which the scene takes place is unmistakably English, with its ivy-covered Gothic church and its romantic setting. This gruesome adventure must therefore be assigned to somewhere about the end of 1582 at the opening of Dee's relations with Kelly, when both were in London. After Dee's return from Prague in 1589 he appears never to have seen Kelly again.

Fig. 144. The Necromantic Bell of Girardius

Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, manuscript No. 3009 (eighteenth century).

A method of evoking the dead which was odd enough and not very common is described in a manuscript at the Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal in Paris, and I particularly recommend so precious a recipe to the reader. Let him examine manuscript No. 3009, entitled *Girardius Parvi Lucii libellus de mirabilibus naturæ arcanis, Anno Domini 1730*. In spite of its Latin title, this work is in very clear and correct French, and is very legibly written. He will find on its sixth and following pages a pleasant chapter headed "Clochette magique et son usage";[1] the bell is otherwise called "the necromantic bell of Girardius." Furnished with this indispensable instrument, the reader will be able to communicate with the other world more easily than Dr John Dee could do.

The manuscript shows how the "necromantic bell" in question should look (Fig. 144). The bottom of the bell bears the ineffable name "Thetragrammaton"; above this are the hieroglyphs appropriate to the seven planets; above these, again, is the word "Adonai," and, lastly, "Jesus" is inscribed upon the ring. In a circle

[1] "The Magic Handbell and its Use."

round the bell are the names of the seven planetary spirits by means of whom the operation is performed; they are Aratron, the spirit of Saturn; Bethor, Jupiter; Phaleg, Mars; Och, the Sun; Hagith, Venus; Ophiel, Mercury; and Phuel, the Moon.

Fig. 145 shows a representation of the operator in ceremonial costume. His right hand holds a parchment inscribed with the seven hieroglyphic planetary signs, his left the bell.

Fig. 145. The Necromantic Bell of Girardius in Use
Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, manuscript No. 3009 (eighteenth century).

Always, according to this document, the bell must be composed of an alloy of lead, tin, iron, gold, copper, fixed mercury, and silver. These metals must be cast together

> at the day and hour of the birth of the person who desires to be in confluence and harmony with the mysterious bell. . . . The name ADONAI must be inscribed upon the handle and JESUS upon the other side of the same [this does not agree with the picture], and upon the thickness or lower circle of the bell inscribe the name TETRAGRAMMATON, and between the two circles inscribe the seven planets, and between the handle and the upper circle the date of birth of the person who is to make use of the bell.

Lastly,

> the bell must be wrapped in a piece of green taffeta and so kept until the person who attempts the great mystery shall have the necessary freedom and opportunity for putting the said bell into the middle of a grave in a cemetery, there to leave it in the condition above said for the space of seven days. Thus remaining clothed in the earth of the cemetery, emanations and confluent vibrations shall be mingled with the impression of the given character, this being what is needed; such effect shall never be lost, and the bell will so be brought to the perpetual quality and efficacy requisite when you shall ring it for your ends.

All the above necromantic processes, however, have been more or less abandoned in our times. It is no longer possible for everybody to go and trace magic circles in cemeteries or even bury a bell in a grave. These practices of another age, which carry in themselves some touch of the barbarous and terrifying, disappeared with the discovery, in the middle of the nineteenth century, of a method of communicating

with the dead at once elegant, easy, practical, and comfortable. This was the method truly suited to our habits and the refinement of our civilization, and there is now no need whatever to go into cemeteries, since one can stay peacefully at home and practise it by one's own fireside.

Among us, in short, the necromantic craft of the witches has been advantageously replaced by spiritualism. Table-turning has been substituted for the antique tripod, and this drawing-room necromancy is so familiar and so readily practised in all parts of the world that I shall say very little about it.

The method was born in the first half of the nineteenth century and at once spread like an epidemic. People delighted in evoking the dead, plying them with the oddest questions and making them speak. And the dead did speak. They answered by means of an ingenious arbitrary alphabet composed of groups of raps which were mysteriously struck upon the table used in table-turning.

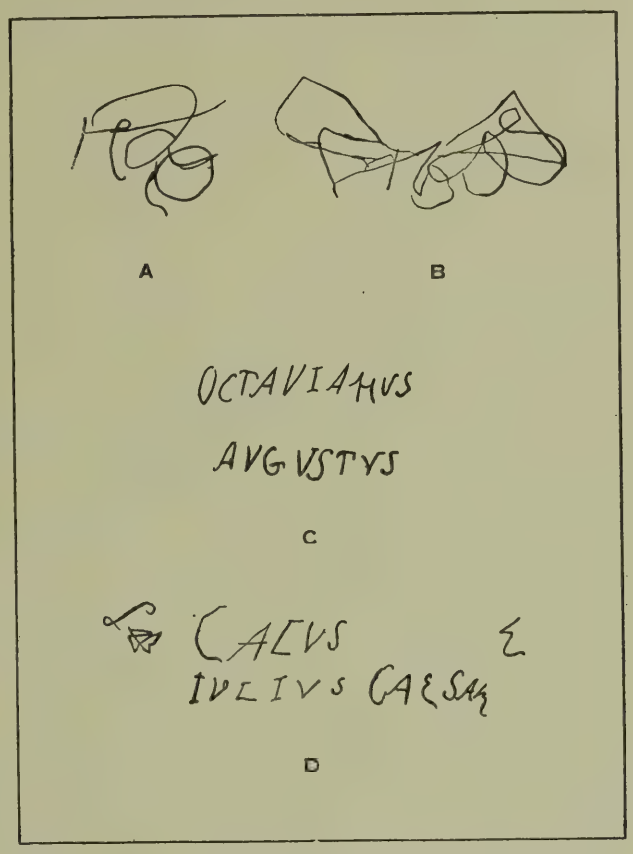


Fig. 146. *A*, First Specimen of Writing from the Other World, obtained in 1856; *B*, Second Specimen of Such Writing; *C*, Writing of the Emperor Augustus, obtained by Necromantic Evocation; *D*, Writing of Julius Cæsar, obtained in the Same Way

L. de Güldenstubbe, *Pneumatologie positive et expérimentale* (Paris, 1857).

But this primitive system was very quickly modified, and I believe it was Baron L. de Güldenstubbe who conceived the idea of getting the dead to write directly upon a sheet of paper by means of a pencil which would move by itself, impelled by an invisible force. He published the result of his experiments in a book entitled *Pneumatologie positive et expérimentale : la réalité des esprits et le phénomène merveilleux de leur écriture directe démontré.* This work is very scarce nowadays.

The following are the words in which he announces this extraordinary event, which certainly marks an epoch in human annals :

> A marvellous discovery was recently made, on August 13, 1856—the day upon which the first successful experiments took place. It was no less than direct supernatural writing by spirits without any intervening agency whatever—either a human medium, that is to

say, or an inanimate object. Here are the names of various eyewitnesses, most of whom were present at several experiments: M. Ravené, senior, owner of a fine picture-gallery in Berlin; Prince Léonide Galitzin, of Moscow; Prince S. Metschesky; Dr Georgii, a pupil of the famous Ling, now in London; Colonel Toutcheff; Dr Bouvron, of Paris; M. Kiorbé, a distinguished Parisian artist, living at 43 Rue du Chemin de Versailles; Colonel de Kollmann, of Paris; Baron de Voigts-Retz, and Baron Borys d'Uexkull. Most of our experiments took place in the Salle des Antiques at the Louvre, in the cathedral of Saint-Denis, and in different Paris churches and cemeteries, as well as at the author's place of residence, 74 Rue du Chemin de Versailles, where the first phenomenon was verified on August 13, 1856.

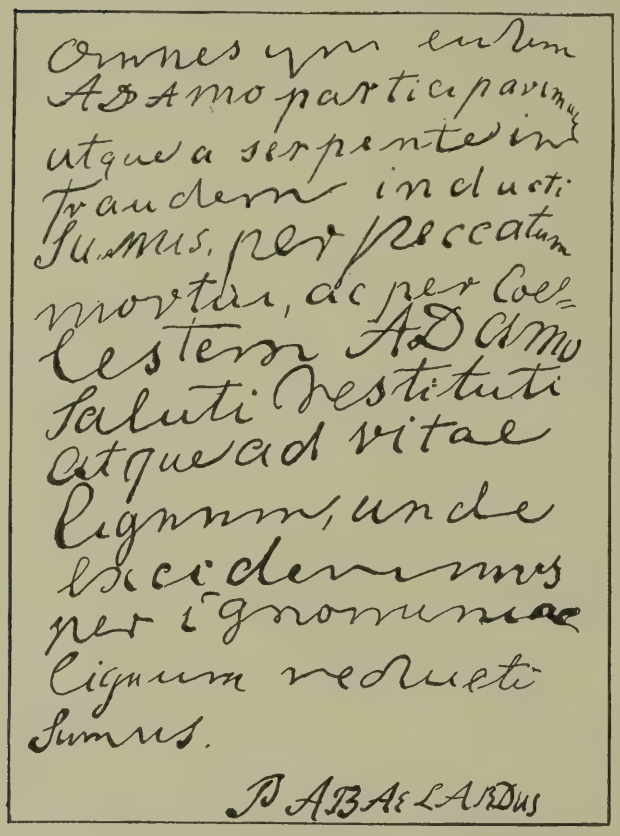


Fig. 147. Writing of the Theologian-Philosopher Pierre Abelard, obtained by Necromantic Evocation

L. de Güldenstubbe, *Pneumatologie positive et expérimentale.*

This first phenomenon was caused by an anonymous spirit, and resulted in a formless tracing which nevertheless sufficed to encourage the author to continue his experiments. We reproduce the scrawl in Fig. 146, *A*, and here is M. de Güldenstubbe's own account of it:

> A figure traced on August 13, 1856—the ever-memorable day upon which the author demonstrated for the first time the marvellous phenomenon of direct writing by spirits. The tracing was done by a spirit at the author's residence, 74 Rue du Chemin de Versailles, Champs-Élysées, at three o'clock in the afternoon.

M. de Güldenstubbe hastened to begin again the next day, and here is what he got (Fig. 146, *B*), which he defines as "a magic figure traced August 14, 1856, also at the author's residence. This figure worked several marvellous and instant cures."

But there was no great interest in questioning these anonymities, and the author did not delay in evoking the illustrious dead, who answered his call at once. The Emperor Augustus and Julius Cæsar rose from their tombs to come and sign their names, in Roman capitals, in M. de Güldenstubbe's album.

Writing in Latin lapidary characters obtained on August 26, in the presence of the

Comte d'Ourches, near the statue of Augustus in the angle of the Gallery of the Roman Emperors at the Louvre [Fig. 146, *C*].

Writing in Latin lapidary characters, written on August 28 at the Louvre, near the statue of Julius Cæsar, in the presence of the Comte d'Ourches [Fig. 146, *D*].

Proceeding chronologically, this modern necromancer next thought of evoking Abelard; he also was prompt in his response and wrote a theological sentence. M. de Güldenstubbe appraises this fragment as follows:

Remarkable writing signed by Abelard, obtained by the author January 20, 1857, at the tomb of that famous man in Père Lachaise, upon the recommendation (in direct writing) of a sympathetic spirit [Fig. 147].

The document reads thus: "Omnes qui eidem Adamo participavimus atque a serpente in fraudem inducti sumus, per peccatum mortui, ac per cœlestem Adamo[um] saluti restituti atque ad vitæ lignum, unde exciderimus per ignominiæ lignum reducti sumus." [1]

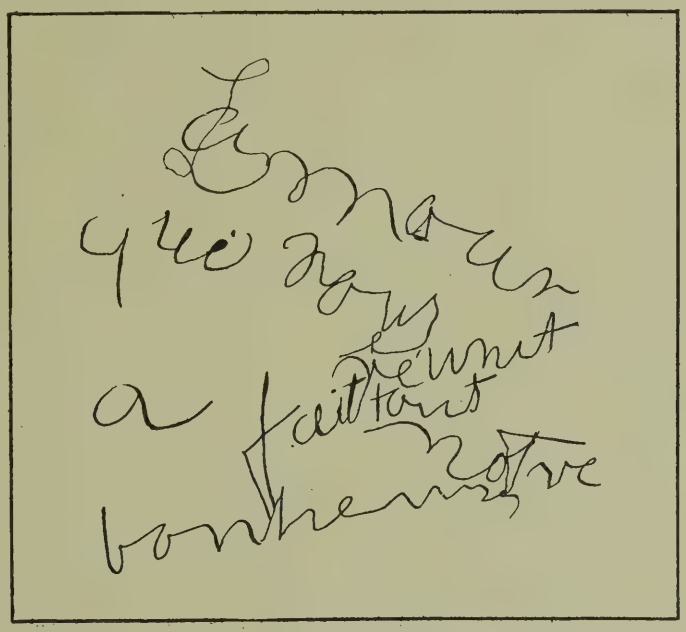


Fig. 148. Writing of Héloïse, obtained by Necromantic Evocation

L. de Güldenstubbe, *Pneumatologie positive et expérimentale.*

Abelard wrote in Latin; he could scarcely do otherwise. In putting *Adamo* the second time instead of *Adamum*—which is evidently required—he made a mistake in his Latin, but who has not done the same? A slip of the pen may very readily happen when one has lost the habit of writing for seven centuries. We might remark that the writing is that of a clumsy nineteenth-century school-child, except for the signature, which shows a vague and unsuccessful attempt at uncials. But we must not be too exacting.

While he was at Abelard's tomb (it is a sham one, by the way, and the famous theologian never lay in it) M. de Güldenstubbe could not fail to evoke Héloïse, who wrote the following, in an excessively scrawly hand: "L'amour qui nous réunit a fait tout notre bonheur" [2] (Fig. 148).

Here we cannot help some small astonishment. Héloïse spoke and wrote Latin as well as Abelard did. It was the language most familiar to her. And

[1] "All we who have shared in this same Adam, and have been led by the serpent into wrongdoing, have died by sin, and by the heavenly Adam are restored to health and brought back to the Tree of Life, whence we were turned aside by the tree of shame."

[2] "The love which reunites us was all our happiness."

when she happened to express herself in the vulgar tongue, which would be seldom, she did not speak the same language as Mlle de Scudéry; from the remoteness of the twelfth century she must have phrased the above sentiment in somewhat this fashion: "Amors ki nos leiet, cil toz fist nostre leece." Hence we have occasion to marvel at the fact that the Abbess of Argenteuil beguiled the leisure of Eternity by keeping herself abreast of the evolution of the French language.

If the reader wishes to form an estimate of the intrinsic value exhibited by these writings from the other world I will provide him with a standard of comparison, leaving him thereafter to his own conclusions. The Baron de Güldenstubbe succeeded in evoking the spirit of Mlle de la Vallière, who became Sœur Louise de la Miséricorde when she became a nun.

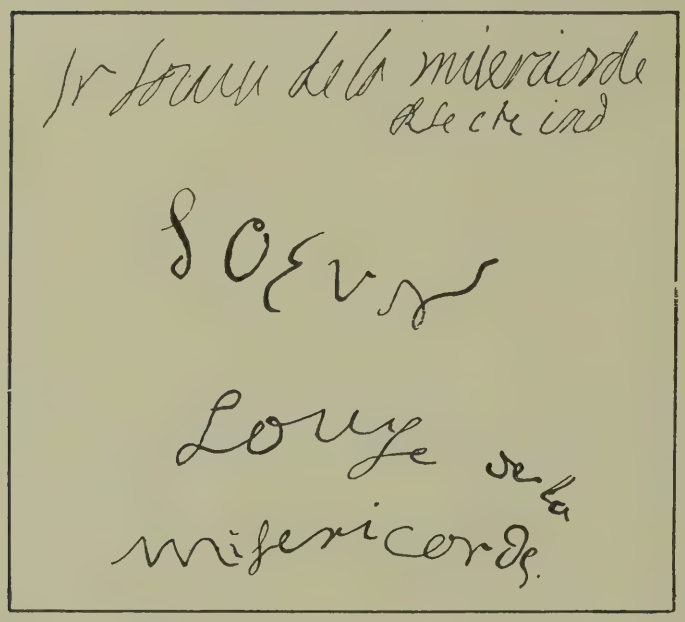


Fig. 149. Actual Signature of Mlle de la Vallière (Sœur Louise de la Miséricorde) from an Authentic Autograph Letter, and the Same Signature given in Necromantic Evocation

The former from the author's collection; the latter from L. de Güldenstubbe's *Pneumatologie positive et expérimentale.*

Here is a reproduction of an authentic original document showing how this celebrated repentant mistress of Louis XIV signed her name when she was secluded in her convent (Fig. 149). The three abbreviated words below "Sr Louise de la Miséricorde" are "rse. car. ind.," which stands for *Religieuse Carmélite indigne* ("Unworthy Carmelite nun").

This is the elegant and distinguished writing of a great lady of the seventeenth century, still proud and aloof despite the solemn humility of the cloister.

Now, how did she sign when evoked by M. de Güldenstubbe a hundred and fifty years after her death? Here is what he puts before our eyes: "Writing of Sœur Louise de la Miséricorde, written in the presence of Colonel de Kollmann, December 29, 1856, in the church of Val-de-Grâce."

Alas! So far from making any intellectual progress, like Sœur Héloïse, Françoise Louise de la Beaume Le Blanc, Duchesse de la Vallière, had even lost her beautiful running hand, and—worried, perhaps, by the colonel's presence—she traced on the paper these three fumbling lines (Fig. 149), which would have been disowned by the very nun set to receive foundlings at the convent turning-box.

XIV

SPELLS

SORCERERS were not exclusively occupied in going to the Sabbath, making demons appear, and evoking the dead. We have seen that some of them never devoted themselves to these forbidding activities. But these had a function no less redoubtable—that of 'casting spells.' We may even say that this was the essential justification of their existence, since the name of sorcery derives ultimately from the word for lots or spells.

Two kinds of spell must be distinguished—the harmful and the useful. The distinction enables us to get a clear idea of what may properly be called the 'double life' of the sorcerer; a personage all-powerful in the countryside, hated and feared in his one aspect on account of the misfortune he could bring upon a household or family, but resorted to in his other when it was a matter of avoiding misfortune or ensuring success.

The sorcerer who studied his own interests was thus able to make money both ways. When his financial resources were exhausted he could work mischief on some farmer, who could only get relief by paying cash. On the other hand, if some illness or pest attacked a community the sorcerer was ready to provide a cure, in consideration of a reasonable payment. Sometimes a sorcerer would even offer to free a bewitched person from the spells of another sorcerer, and then a struggle would start between the two diabolic experts, the unlucky spellbound subject paying all costs.

Sorcerers and witches could stop the way of ships at sea or prevent windmills from working. They would dry up cows, stop the sprouting of corn, turn the baker's bread black, freeze wine in the casks, stir up strife among friendly folk, provoke epidemics, and raise storms. If they were asked to do it they would, on the other hand, put out conflagrations, staunch the bleeding of wounds, extract the missile from bullet-wounds, stop a famine, or cure maladies beyond the skill of physicians. So on all accounts their repute was considerable.

It was among the northern peoples—and chiefly in the essentially maritime Scandinavian countries—that sorcerers and witches most often exercised their power of loosing tempests or stilling the waves, whichever they were asked to do. In I. Ziarnko's engraving of the Sabbath, given in the work by De l'Ancre (Fig. 46),

we saw witches leaving the assembly on their broomsticks, " and going off," as the author tells us, " over the sea or elsewhere to raise storms and tempests."

The witch shown by Olaus Magnus (Fig. 151) in his *Historia de gentibus septentrionalibus* is stirring up a frightful storm and making a ship founder by emptying her cauldron into the sea. In another illustration to the same work we see two navigators on the poop of a caravel (Fig. 152) bargaining with a sorcerer who stands on a rock jutting out of the sea about the price of a rope with three knots that he is holding. Winds are tied up in these three knots; on undoing them the possessor of the rope will get a gentle west-south-westerly breeze from the first, a fairly strong north wind from the second, and a dreadful tempest from the third. A sailor on a sinking ship in the background seems to be anxiously awaiting the result of the deal.

Fig. 150. Witches bringing a Shower of Rain
Ulrich Molitor, *De Laniis et phitonicis mulieribus* (Constance, 1489).

The two witches in Ulrich Molitor's print (Fig. 150) are busied with some sorcery which is bringing a downpour of rain; they have effected this by holding a cock over a flaming cauldron.

Similar results were obtained by various odd methods, such as drawing certain diagrams, shutting a toad or a spider up in a pot, or reading consecrated formulas. A manuscript in the Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, numbered 2348 and entitled *Livre de la Clavicule de Salomon, roy des Hébreux, traduit par Abraham Colorno*, gives a series of about thirty pentacles, beginning on p. 129, collected under the heading of " A set of the sacred pentacles setting forth Hebrew and Chaldean letters in their just shapes, colours, and characters, with the virtues thereto proper for the use and knowledge of our Art, as it was learned and known by me, Abraham Colorno." Among these we may note the one shown in Fig. 153, which enables earthquakes to be set in motion; the book explains how this happens in the very simple

Fig. 151. Witch raising a Storm
Olaus Magnus, *Historia de gentibus septentrionalibus.*

Fig. 152. Sorcerer selling Mariners the Winds tied up in Three Knots of a Rope
Olaus Magnus, *Historia de gentibus septentrionalibus.*

conclusion, " since the efficacy of every Angel suffices to make the whole Universe tremble." At the top of this pentacle is drawn the transcendent pentacle called " Solomon's Seal," which is composed of two equilateral triangles, one standing on its base, the other poised on its apex. All round the circle runs the Latin phrase, " Commota est et contremuit terra; fundamenta montium conturbata sunt et commota sunt quoniam iratus est "; this is Psalm xviii, 7—" The earth shook and trembled; the foundations also of the hills moved and were shaken, because he was wroth." Within the circle and the triangles dividing it are groups of Hebrew letters and " planetary cabbalistic characters " which are supposed to correspond to the invisible powers; their interpretation is more than dubious. Nevertheless this pentacle—drawn, of course, on virgin parchment—will be found to have an infallible effect.

Fig. 153. Pentacle for causing Earthquakes
Clavicule de Salomon (Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, manuscript No. 2348).

In former centuries an object called the 'hand of glory' was an extremely popular element in spells. This hand is visible in many of the pictures of witchcraft reproduced in this book; it is generally found on the chimney-mantel up which the initiates are flying (Figs. 33, 34, and 135). A book published at Cologne in 1722, *Secrets merveilleux de la magie naturelle et cabalistique du Petit Albert*, contains a description and picture (Fig. 155) of this evil charm; the mode of preparing it is not particularly cheerful.

" I own that I have never proved the secret of the Hand of Glory," says the author of this singular little book,

> but I have several times been present when sentence was passed upon various scoundrels who had confessed under torture to having employed the Hand of Glory in robberies

committed by them. The use of the Hand of Glory is to stupefy those to whom it is displayed and render them motionless, in such a way that they can no more stir than if they were dead. It is thus prepared: Take the right or left hand of a felon who is hanging from a gibbet beside a highway; wrap it in part of a funeral pall and so wrapped squeeze it well. Then put it into an earthenware vessel with zimat, nitre, salt, and long peppers, the whole well powdered. Leave it in this vessel for a fortnight, then take it out and expose it to full sunlight during the dog-days until it becomes quite dry. If the sun is not strong enough put it in an oven heated with fern and vervain. Next make a kind of candle with the fat of a gibbeted felon, virgin wax, sesame, and ponie, and use the Hand of Glory as a candlestick to hold this candle when lighted, and then those in every place into which you go with this baneful instrument shall remain motionless.

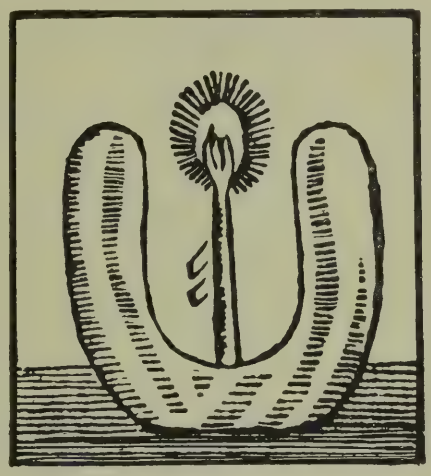


Fig. 154. The Wondrous Candle
Secrets merveilleux de la magie naturelle et cabalistique du Petit Albert (Cologne, 1722).

The difficulty of this sufficiently gruesome preparatory process is increased by the uncertainty attaching to the word "zimat." Is it *zimar*, which means verdigris, according to David de Planis-Campy, or *zimax*, which—still according to the same author—corresponds to the Arabian sulphate of iron? As to the word "ponie," its meaning is entirely unknown to us; in the dialect of Lower Normandy, however, *ponie* means horse-dung, and it is more than probable that this was the ingredient used by sorcerers, as it is very combustible once it is dry.

But the reader will scarcely want to make use of the Hand of Glory, and would far rather know how to shield himself from its effects. *Le Petit Albert* tells freely how this is to be done, and the method is, moreover, quite simple.

"The Hand of Glory," says the book, "would become ineffective, and thieves would not be able to utilize it, if you were to rub the threshold or other parts of the house by which they may enter with an unguent composed of the gall of a black cat, the fat of a white hen, and the blood of a screech-owl; this substance must be compounded during the dog-days."

One never fails to see a lighted candle standing alongside the Hand of Glory on a sorcerer's chimney-piece. This is the Magic Candle, which enables one to discover buried treasure (Fig. 154); the discovery of its secret is attributed to Jerome Cardan. *Le Petit Albert* again comes to our aid with this priceless recipe:

You must have a big candle composed of human tallow, and it must be fixed into a piece of hazel-wood fashioned in the manner shown in the picture. And then if this candle, being lighted in a subterranean place, sparkles brightly with a good deal of noise it is a sign that there is treasure in that place, and the nearer you approach the treasure the

more will the candle sparkle, going out at length when you are quite close. You must have other candles in lanterns so as not to be left without light. When there are sound reasons for believing that treasure is watched over by the spirits of dead men it is good to have wax candles which have been blessed instead of common candles, and to conjure the spirits in the name of God to declare whether there is anything you can do to help them to a place of untroubled rest. And you must not fail to do what they require.

Even to-day spells affecting milk are common in country places.

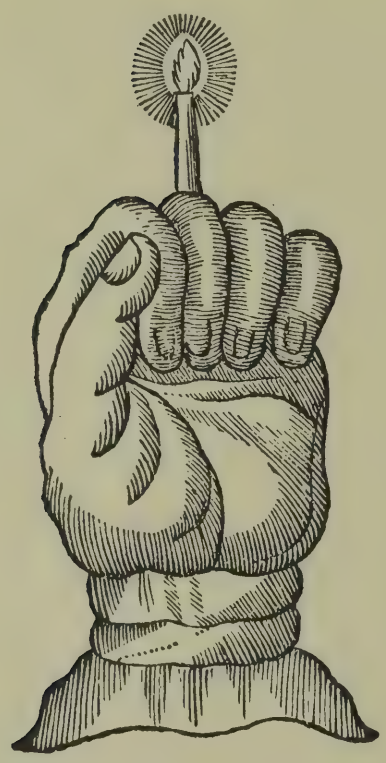


Fig. 155. The Hand of Glory
Secrets merveilleux de la magie naturelle et cabalistique du Petit Albert.

When a witch wanted to harm a peasant she dried up the milk of his cows, and the unfortunate man had no other remedy than to seek out the witch and beg her to lift the spell, paying her price for doing so. In his *Démonomanie* (V, 3) Jean Bodin informs us, however, that a witch may be punished in this way : if one should have some of the milk of a dried-up cow he should set it on to boil in a pot, striking thereon with a stick; then the Devil would simultaneously deal the witch like blows, and this would force her to come and take off the spell. Sometimes a witch would cause cows to yield blue milk, and, by an irony of fate, this bewitched milk was always twice as abundant as the good milk.

When, on the other hand, there was a dearth of milk on a farm a skilful witch could manage to get it from the most anomalous objects ; most often she would make it flow from an axe-handle. Fig. 156 is extracted from a very old German work, *Die Emeis*, by Dr Johannes Geiler von Keisersperg. It shows an old witch, clearly well used to the business, milking the handle of an axe, the edge of which she has buried in one of the wooden pillars supporting the rustic house. The milk is flowing freely into a tub, and the wondering delight of the two housewives present at the operation is quite evident. Under the projecting upper storey of the house the inevitable witch's cauldron is steaming over a blazing fire, and even the lean cow by the cowshed seems to be surprised at the sight of the unexpected compensatory substitute which replaces her own missing milk. This little scene, presented in a setting of dilapidated cottages over-topped by the traditional small village church, is one of the most sincere and characteristic I know.

Ulrich Molitor's book, *De Laniis et phitonicis mulieribus*, which I have cited before, furnishes a picture of another country spell (Fig. 157). A witch armed with

a bow has encountered a peasant in the fields and shot him in the foot with an enchanted hazel-wand ; he has been obliged to take off his shoe because he feels his foot swelling enormously. The calm, green-eyed witch is no doubt waiting until the peasant has made up his mind to open his pouch and untie his purse before she reverses her spell and heals him.

Certain spells were only profitable to sorcerers themselves, and gave them advantages much envied by the common run of mortals. Those who, like Holler,

Fig. 156. Witch milking the Handle of an Axe
Dr Johannes Geiler von Keisersperg, *Die Emeis* (Strasbourg, 1517).

the famous Baltic sorcerer, could cross the sea on the surface of the water, perched on a plain piece of wood (Fig. 158), were ahead of their time in owning a water-glider which would give a seafarer happiness even to-day. Unluckily, we do not know the secret of this precious artifice. By way of amends the Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal has a manuscript (No. 2350) entitled *Le Secret des secrets*, and chapter v of this work expounds a secret more precious still perhaps—the secret of invisibility. Armed with this, sorcerers could join gatherings or enter houses without any suspecting their presence. No doubt many of my readers will be eager to know this secret ; here it is—just the repetition of the following prayer :

Athal, Bathel, Nothe, Jhoram, Asey, Cleyungit, Gabellin, Semeney, Mencheno, Bal,

Labenenten, Nero, Meclap, Helateroy, Palcin, Timgimiel, Plegas, Peneme, Fruora, Hean, Ha, Ararna, Avira, Ayla, Seye, Peremies, Seney, Levesso, Huay, Baruchalù, Acuth, Tural, Buchard, Caratim, per misericordiam abibit ergo mortale perficiat qua hoc opus ut invisibiliter ire possim.

The manuscript tells us that at this point, if it is considered opportune, certain characters may be written in bat's blood and a conjuration performed, but this is quite discretionary; the essential thing is to continue the prayer thus:

Fig. 157. The Spell of the Bow
Ulrich Molitor, *De Laniis et phitonicis mulieribus.*

O tu Pontation, Magister invisibilitatis cum Magistris tuis, Tenem, Musach, Motagren, Bries vel Brys, Domedis, Ugemal, Abdita, Patribisib, Tangadentet, Ciclap, Clinet, Z, Succentat, Colleig, Bereith et Plintia, Gastaril, Oletel, conjuro te Pontation, et ipsos Ministros invisibilitatis per illum qui contremere facit orbem per Cœlum et terram, Cherubim et Seraphim et per illum qui generare fecit in virgine et Deus est cum homine, ut hoc experimentum perfectæ perficiam, est in quæcumquæ hora voluero, sim invisibilis; Iterum conjuro te et tuos Ministros, pro Stabuches et Mechærom, Esey, Enitgiga, Bellis, Semonei, ut Statim venias cum dictis ministris tuis et perficias hoc opus sicut scitis, et hoc experimentum me invisibilem faciat, ut nemo me videat. Amen.

The manuscript rightly adds: "Note that it is absolutely necessary to know the above principles!" It does not say—but it goes without saying—that these prayers are not efficacious unless said in Latin. A version in the vulgar tongue would have no influence over the occult powers surrounding us. I give a translation of this beautiful conjuration all the same, in case some of my readers should not get the sense of it quite easily:

O thou, Pontation! master of invisibility, with thy masters [here follow the names of the masters], I conjure thee, Pontation, and these same masters of invisibility, by Him

Who makes the universe tremble, by Heaven and Earth, Cherubim and Seraphim, and by Him Who made the Virgin conceive and Who is God and Man, that I may accomplish this experiment in perfectibility, in such sort that at any hour I desire I may be invisible; again I conjure thee and thy ministers also, by Stabuches and Mechærom, Esey, Enitgiga, Bellis, and Semonei, that thou come straightway with thy said ministers and that thou perform this work as you all know how, and that this experiment may make me invisible, in such wise that no one may see me. Amen.

It is also very easy, according to several Black-books, to become invisible by carrying the heart of a bat, a black hen, or a frog under the right arm. A more elegant method is to wear the Ring of Gyges on your finger; you can then become visible or invisible at will simply by turning the stone inward or outward. This ring must be made of fixed mercury; it must be set with a little stone to be found in a lapwing's nest, and round the stone must be engraved the words, "Jésus passant ✠ par le milieu d'eux ✠ s'en allait."[1] You must put the ring on your finger, and if you look at yourself in a mirror and cannot see the ring it is a sure sign that it has been successfully manufactured.

Fig. 158. Sorcerer crossing the Sea by means of a Spell
Olaus Magnus, *Historia de gentibus septentrionalibus.*

I said previously that sorcerers could sometimes nullify spells cast by other sorcerers and would so wage pitiless war upon one another. A powerful sorcerer would even succeed in completely annihilating the powers of an inferior sorcerer and actually binding him with a counter-spell. Olaus Magnus quotes a remarkable example of this in his *Historia de gentibus septentrionalibus.* In Lake Wetter, "among the Ostrogoths," he says,

there is a very populous island with two parish churches thereupon. A cavern extends beneath the island, and in the cavern is a certain sorcerer, Gilbert the Magician, who was vanquished in very ancient times by his own master, Catillum, whom he had dared to insult, by means of magic arts. He was shackled by two wooden bars inscribed with certain Gothic and runic characters in such manner that he could not move his limbs; these bars Catillum threw down upon him.

[1] "Jesus, passing through the midst of them, went his way" (Luke iv, 30).

Fig. 159 shows this sorcerer, who was to stay shackled, according to the legend, until set free by the spell of another sorcerer. Runic characters are plainly visible upon the two strips of wood suggesting a cangue which confine his limbs. In the sixteenth century this cavern was an object of superstitious terror, and none dared venture into it.

Fig. 159. The Shackled Sorcerer
Olaus Magnus, *Historia de gentibus septentrionalibus.*

XV

PHILTRES AND DEATH-SPELLS

OF the spells two ranged very widely and filled an important place through the whole of the Middle Ages ; they were the philtre, or love-spell, and the death-spell. Corresponding as they did to man's two great preoccupations in the primitive life of those epochs, they were surrounded, to the imagination, with inexpressible fascination. They were fearsome sacraments of the Diabolic Church, and any human being, at any moment of life, might be unwittingly affected by them.

The philtre is frequently referred to in medieval literature, as well in the heroic epics as in plays and miracles. It is a powerful dramatic motive force, easy to set working and of the greatest utility in difficult situations. The name is applied to a liquor composed of wine as a basis, with the addition of expertly mixed herbs or other drugs to give it the property of inspiring the man or woman who drinks it with irresistible love for some specified person.

In the romance of Tristan and Iseult, a philtre intended by Iseult's mother for King Mark is drunk by Iseult and Tristan together, and it fills them with the passion which was to be fatal to them in the end. In the *Götterdämmerung* Richard Wagner made use of another philtre to turn Siegfried from Brünnhilde and fire him with love for Gutrune, although this incident is not mentioned in the Scandinavian sagas, known as *eddas*, from which he drew the elements of his musical tragedy.

The composition of philtres was infinitely varied ; here is one recipe for them taken from the *Zekerboni* of Pierre Mora (manuscript No. 2790 of the Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal) :

> To make oneself beloved there shall be taken, to wit, the heart of a dove, the liver of a sparrow, the womb of a swallow, the kidney of a hare, and they shall be reduced to impalpable powder. Then the person who shall compound the philtre shall add an equal part of his own blood, dried and in the same way powdered. If the person whom it is desired to draw into love is caused to swallow this powder in a dose of two or three drachms marvellous success will follow.

Another and much favoured formula consisted of powdering the root of *Enula campana*, gathered on St John's Eve, an orange, and some ambergris, mixing them and adding to the mixture a piece of paper with the word ' sheva ' written upon it.

The Museum at Leipzig contains a superb picture by an unknown master of the Flemish School, dating from the middle of the fifteenth century. It portrays a naked young witch preparing a philtre in the middle of a delightfully archaistic room (Fig. 160). A coffer with a heart inside it rests on a stool, and the witch is letting a liquid fall upon the heart, drop by drop, from a kind of ampulla she holds in one hand. She has not had to wait long for the result. The young man in the background, dressed like a hunter, is probably the one she wanted to ensnare. He is entering by the half-open door with the gait of a phantom, visibly drained of all personal volition.

In this charming scene it is probable that the witch is acting on her own account, but those who wished to use a philtre were often incapable of compounding it themselves and had to apply to professional witches. By one of those contradictions so frequent in the Satanic realm it was the oldest and most hideous and repulsive witches who knew the recipes for the most efficacious love-liquors. A realistic fresco by Goya in the Prado Gallery at Madrid (Fig. 161) shows that he knew this well, master as he was of infernal subjects. This fresco is rather less pleasant than the preceding picture ; it represents an utterly diabolical witch, with her countenance twisted into a low grimace and piercing gimlet eyes, grinning and covetous. She is stirring the loathly liquor of a philtre with a spoon, while a snub-nosed confederate with a head like a skull spells out the difficult syllables of a Black-book. By way of mockery, the confederate's right hand is caricaturing the episcopal gesture of benediction.

Other differences apart, love-spells did not always take the form of a liquor. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the use of the philtre proper seems to have been abandoned to some extent, doubtless on account of the difficulty of getting it drunk by the person it was desired to attract, and it was replaced by easier and, no doubt, more efficient processes. The eighteenth-century manuscript No. 2344 in the Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, entitled *Opération des sept esprits des planètes*, has a subdivision, " Segrets de magie pour se faire aimer." [1] These secrets are about fifty in number, and are indecorous and not at all appetizing for the most part. I will quote three very easy ones which are in no way offensive to our modern delicacy.

" To gain the love of a girl or a woman," says the estimable author,

> you must pretend to cast her horoscope—that is to say, when she shall be married—and must make her look right into your eyes. When you are both in the same position you are to repeat the words, " Kafé, Kasita non Kafela et publia filii omnibus suis." These words said, you may command the female and she will obey you in all you desire.

[1] " Magic Secrets for making Oneself Beloved."

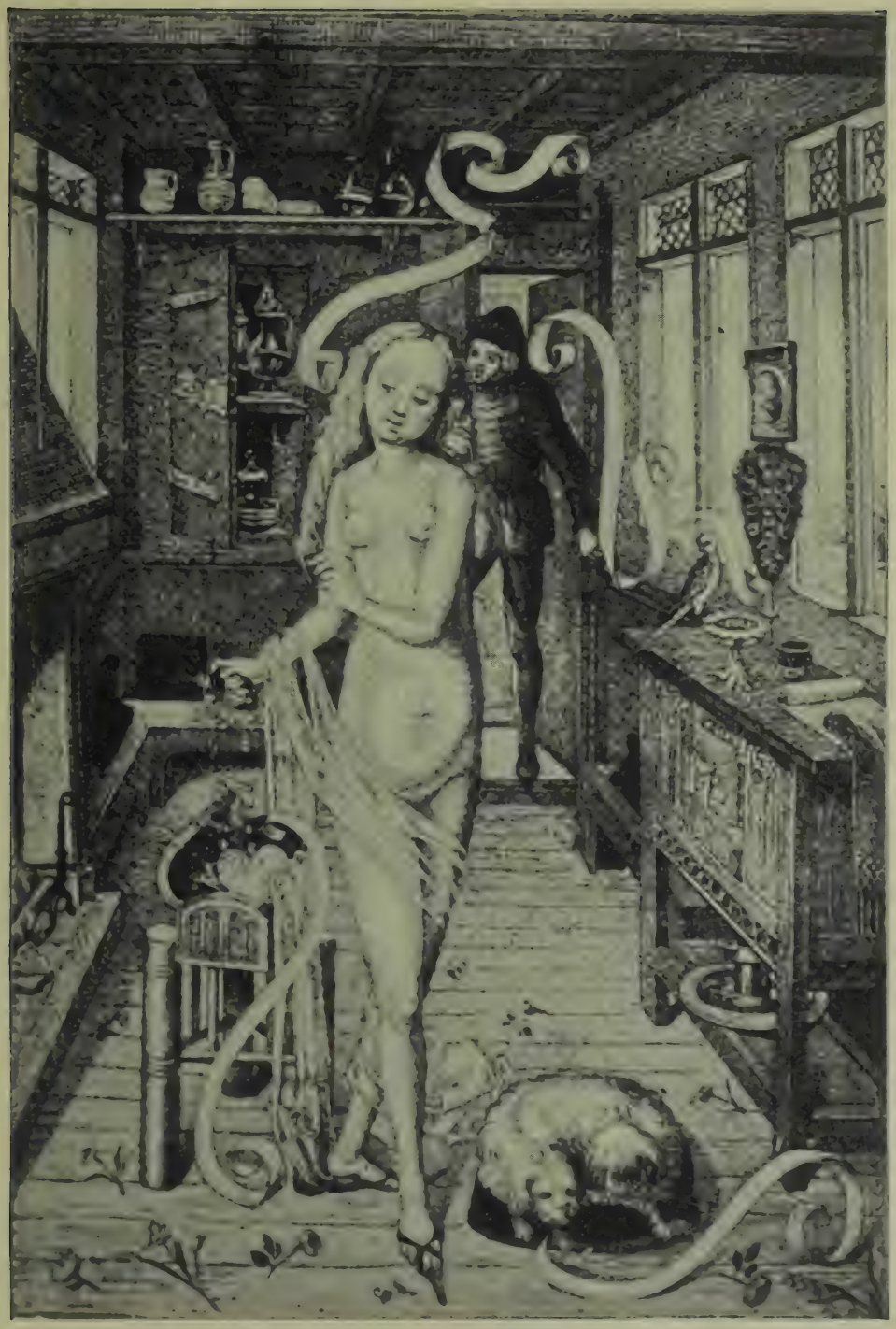


Fig. 160. Witch preparing a Philtre
By an unknown Master of the Flemish School; middle of the fifteenth century.
Leipzig Museum.

The second recipe is evidently not practicable at all seasons :

> To gain the love of a person, rub your hands with the juice of vervain and touch the man or woman you wish to inspire with love.

It would be worth while trying this method, although, of course, vervain juice is not always at hand. Here is a better and far simpler one :

> While touching the girl's hand with yours you must say the following words : " Bestarberto corrumpit viscera ejus mulieris." [1]

Fig. 161. Witch preparing a Philtre
Goya.
Prado Gallery, Madrid.

And that is all ! It would be very silly to hunt for complicated liquors when so simple a process is available, and my readers cannot be forgiven if they fail to give it a trial.

Lastly, men or women who cannot even touch the hand of the person in whom they are interested need not give up all hope ; the magic art has not quite done with them. The *Clavicules de Salomon* (manuscript No. 2348, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal) has thought of them and set down this pentacle for their use (Fig. 162). It is most effective, and will, according to the accompanying explanation, " force the spirits of Venus to obey and to compel any woman whatever to come in a moment."

[1] " Bestarberto entices the inward parts of the woman."

This pentacle is a masterly composition of circles, semicircles, cross, and square. Around the circle is the Latin posy, "Hoc est enim os de ossibus meis et caro de carne mea, et erunt duo in carne una." This is from Genesis ii, 23, 24: "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh. . . . And they shall be one flesh." Almost every letter of the Hebrew alphabet can be descried among the ornaments of this pentacle.

And now we come to perhaps the most terrible spell of all—that which attacked unseen human life itself and spread intense terror in the very Courts of Europe. I mean the death-spell.

This spell was worked by forming a waxen image of the person intended to die

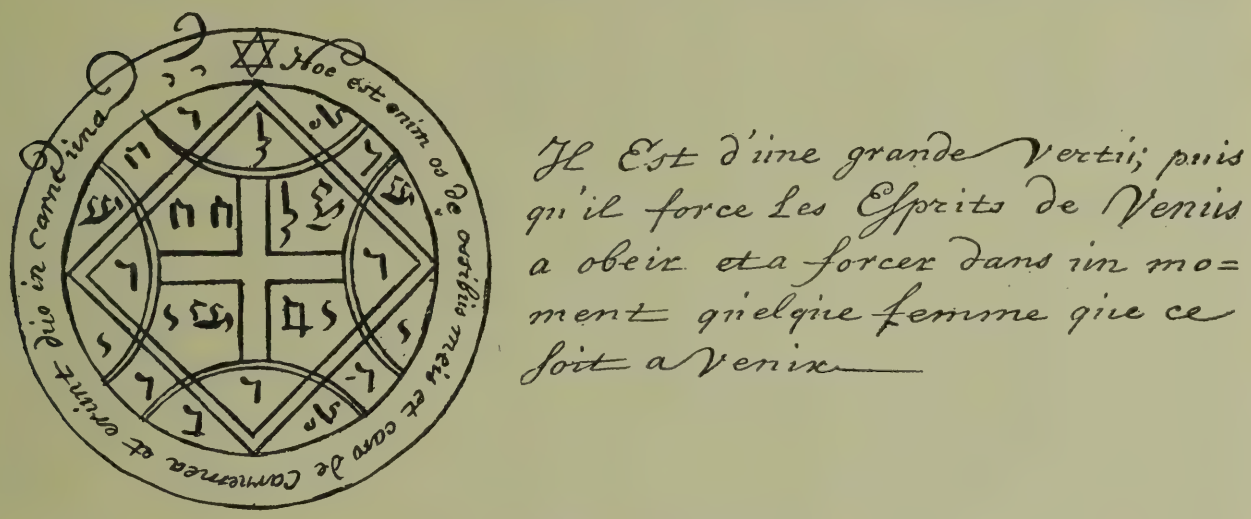


Fig. 162. Pentacle to gain Love

Clavicules de Salomon (Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, manuscript No. 2348).

and inflicting wounds upon it which would be exactly reproduced at a distance, by occult transmission, upon the living person, who would thus die mysteriously without apparent cause. Instead of the waxen image a human heart was sometimes used; long needles would be thrust into this with the intention of actually piercing the heart of the foe of whom it was desired to be rid.

Iconographic documents relating to this kind of spell are of the most extreme rarity—we might almost say that there are none at all. Still, in the picture by Frans Francken, *An Assembly of Witches*, reproduced in Fig. 34, we do see, on a table in the centre of the composition, a human skull into which the blade of a knife has been driven. This is an obvious indication of an attempt at casting the death-spell which does not come into the immediate scene but must have been performed previously.

This instance notwithstanding, the waxen figures were generally used in attempting

this evil work; skulls were seldom employed. An enigmatic object lies at the lower part of this same picture, and slightly to the right. It might be a toad by the atrocious gape of the mouth; but the arm elegantly curved in an oratorical gesture terminates in a child's hand, and by this it looks like a mandrake. In any case, its bladder-belly has a navel and is pierced with an arrow. It was the knowledge that shapes of this kind existed which sowed fear among the common, and, even more often, among the great.

Cosmo Ruggieri, the astrologer, seems to have made the death-spell fashionable at the Court of France in the sixteenth century. The Bibliothèque Nationale has a manuscript—Collection Dupuy, vol. 590—on p. 24 of which there are copies of two letters from Catherine de Médicis to the Procureur Général of the Paris Parlement touching "Cosme Ruggier, a Florentine, accused of having made a waxen image with hostile intent against the King, Charles IX, in 1574." The Queen complains in these terms:

> Monsieur le Procureur, yesterday evening some one told me on your behalf that Cosmo has made a wax figure and dealt it blows on the head, and that the intent of the said figure was against the King. Cosmo inquired whether the King was vomiting and whether he was yet bleeding and if he had pains in his head.

Ruggieri was arrested the next day. P. 26 of the same manuscript contains a report dated April 26, 1574, addressed to M. de la Guele, a Royal Councillor, in which we read that "The King's Queen-Mother has bidden me write you that the necromancer little Cosmo, who is known to you, has been taken prisoner and put in ward with the Provost of the Palace."

Charles IX died a month later, on May 31, at which time he was attacked by a mysterious consumption. Del Rio alleged that he was fatally enchanted by Protestant sorcerers, who day by day melted waxen images representing him, and that the life of the King ebbed more and more every time this was done.

The English Court was a prey to the same anxieties. One morning about 1560 the Privy Council summoned Dr John Dee in great haste. A waxen image of Queen Elizabeth, with a large pin stuck in the breast, had been found in Lincoln's Inn Fields. Thomas Wilson, who later became a Secretary of State, took the astrologer off to the Queen at Richmond. She was sitting in her private garden, hard by the river. Dudley was beside her, insolent as usual, and the Lords of the Privy Council were also present. Dee had to expound the machinery of death-spells to them, and he had great trouble in reassuring the deeply superstitious Queen, who was much agitated.

I must mention three important instances of death-spells which are among the oldest known in the field of history. The first is that connected with Duff, King of

Scotland, in the tenth century ; the next, that cast on Queen Blanche of Navarre by Guichard, Bishop of Troyes, in 1304 ; and the last, the one by which Robert III of Artois tried to kill the King of France, Philippe VI of Valois, in 1333. Robert had been accused of producing forged title-deeds and suborning witnesses in support of his alleged rights to the Countship of Artois. He had refused to appear before the King in answer to this charge, and was condemned to perpetual banishment and the loss of all his property by a decree of the Paris Parlement. He fled first to Liége, then to Namur, and lastly to England, and tried to cast a death-spell upon the King, the Queen, Jeanne de Bourgogne, and their son Jean. His confessor, a monk named Sagebran, revealed the secret to the King, whose blundering wrath only served to inflame Robert's hate. He was vehement in urging the King of England, Edward III, to take the title of King of France, and this little-known occult episode was one of the immediate determining causes of the Hundred Years War.

Fig. 163. Robert III of Artois attempting to cast a Death-spell on the King of France, Philippe VI of Valois, in 1333
Garnier, *Figures de l'histoire de France* (engraved by Moreau le Jeune, 1778).

The picture reproduced of this affair (Fig. 163) is extracted from a collection by Garnier entitled *Figures de l'histoire de France*, engraved by Moreau le Jeune in 1778 ; the collection is very rarely found complete. Robert of Artois and three assistants are shown about to engage in their grim task. The engraving has no historical value, for Moreau le Jeune knew nothing about the manners, customs, or dress of the Middle Ages, and the death-spell was certainly not cast in this way in the fourteenth century. The very anachronisms of the picture, on the other hand, do indicate perfectly how the spell was cast in the eighteenth century, since the artist has treated his subject in accordance with the data furnished by his own time. At the left of the scene a servant is carrying a bowl of warm wax intended for the manufacture of the figures. Robert of Artois, the spell-caster, is holding a waxen image representing the King in Court costume, and is preparing to prick it with a needle

which he holds in his other clenched hand. He is apparently pronouncing the words of a conjuration, which he reads from a Black-book one of his assistants is holding wide open in front of him. Two other little wax figures are thrown carelessly on the table; they are the images of the Queen and the Prince. The third assistant leaning on the back of the armchair seems to be frightened by what Robert is doing, and we may guess that this is he who will betray the secret in high quarters.

Certain museums still preserve various wax figures stuck through and through with pins which were used for casting death-spells, but the vestiges now remaining of this gruesome and terrifying act of sorcery are few.

XVI

THE PUNISHMENT OF SORCERERS

HROUGH the whole of the Middle Ages and down to about the end of the seventeenth century—even later in Germany, Spain, and Italy—sorcerers were vilified, persecuted, and hunted down. It was thought that the worst of punishments were reserved for them in eternity, and the tale ran that the Devil was often to be seen seizing a witch when her promised period of grace had run out, and carrying her off to the place in Hell she had undoubtedly earned. We find such an incident depicted in the *Historia de gentibus septentrionalibus*, by Olaus Magnus. This picture (Fig. 164) shows a witch seized by Lucifer in person, horned and crowned, and held on the withers of his black horse. Damned beyond remedy as she is, she is still hurling curses at the town she is forced to leave, where another witch is busy conjuring away the effects of one of her last efforts in witchcraft.

Great as might be the power of faith, however, men had but small confidence in the effectiveness of punishments inflicted by demons as compared with those they had at their own disposal. They considered it more certain, in a general way, to forestall the pains of eternity by the less theoretical and more concrete torments of this world, and so they haled witches and sorcerers before the tribunals, flung them to the torturer, and put them to death because they feared the evil they might do and the scandals—so prejudicial to religion—which they created around them. A still stronger motive for their assiduity was obedience to the cruel and inexorable Scriptural commandment of Exodus xxii, 18: "Maleficos non patieris vivere." [1]

The earlier punishments inflicted on sorcerers by European laws were certainly milder than those of the Mosaic law. We saw previously that by the Salic Law a witch who had "eaten man's flesh" could get out of trouble by paying two hundred gold sous. The same law (Title LXVII, Article I) says:

> If anyone calls another *hereburgium*—that is to say, *strioportium*, or sorcerer—or accuses him of carrying a cauldron to a gathering-place of witches, and shall not be able to offer proof of what he says, he shall be condemned to pay twice fifty deniers, which makes sixty-two and a half gold sous.

But the Salic Law does not say what was to happen if proof were furnished, and

[1] "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live."

it should be carefully remarked that in its severity toward the calumniator it seems to have forgotten the person who might actually carry a cauldron.

For the rest, the Ecclesiastical Councils, such as that of Laodicea in 363 or of Berkhamsted in 697, contented themselves with driving sorcerers out of the Church or fining them. The secular judges of the Middle Ages do not seem to have raged beyond reason against sorcerers. Guichard, Bishop of Troyes, who was accused in 1303 of being the son of a demon whom he called up whenever he wished, was merely imprisoned, and managed to recover his good name later on.

It is not until we come to the fifteenth century that a stubborn and savage persecution begins, above all in France and Spain ; this was the true persecution of the

Fig. 164. The Devil carrying off a Witch
Olaus Magnus, *Historia de gentibus septentrionalibus.*

sorcerers. While the Portuguese authorities were content to banish them from the land, in France—in Artois especially—they were treated with the uttermost severity. They were put to the question and tortured ; fire was set under the soles of their feet, and they were forced to swallow boiling oil. Such cruelty was shown them that in 1491 the Parlement of Paris itself was concerned at it and annulled all the trials held before the Arras judges, accusing them of having wished to possess themselves of the property belonging to sorcerers and condemning them to pay their victims a heavy forfeit by way of compensation.

Trials for sorcery ceased for some time, and it began to seem that man had attained greater tolerance ; but the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries brought an intensified resumption. The famous Henry Boguet, " chief justice of the Countship of Burgundy," must be mentioned among the judges who persecuted sorcerers and witches most rancorously. His *Discours exécrable des sorciers, avec une instruction pour un juge en faict de sorcellerie,* was published at Rouen in 1603, and in it he

recounts in the most ingenuous fashion the cruelties he had done to sorcerers in his various trials. The French *parlements* for long followed his *Instruction* to the letter. After his death his family, obeying a quite understandable impulse of shame, destroyed all the examples of his work they were able to find. Another implacable persecutor was the no less famous Martin del Rio, one of the " executioner-judges of the Council of Blood " instituted by the Duke of Alva in connexion with his campaign of persecution in Flanders. He wrote the *Controverses et recherches magiques, avecques la manière de procéder en justice contre les magiciens et sorciers, accommodée à l'instruction des confesseurs*, published at Paris by André Duchesne in 1611.

Other authors, without being judges themselves, contributed greatly to the persecution of sorcerers by the unpitying punishments they advocated. One such is De l'Ancre, several times quoted here ; another is Jean Bodin, the philosopher who, after writing the luminous book *De Republica*, dishonoured himself by publishing *La Démonomanie des sorciers* in 1582. The theologians also lent their aid, as, for instance, the unascertained author of the *Malleus maleficarum*, or *Hammer of the Witches* ; Père Crespet, with his *Deux livres de la hayne de Sathan*, and the Révérend Père Guaccius, with his *Compendium maleficarum*.

In England Henry VIII and Elizabeth persecuted sorcerers with extreme vigour, and we must not forget the sinister James I, who took the trouble to write with his own royal hand the treatise entitled *Dæmonologia, hoc est adversus incantationem sive magiam institutio, auctore serenissimo potentissimoque principe Dn. Jacobo, Deo gratia Angliæ, Scotiæ, Hyberniæ ac Franciæ Rege, fidei defensore* (Hanover, 1604).

This work is a dialogue in three parts between Philomathus and Epistemon, the latter presenting the King's view, in which every question dealing with demons, sorcery, and the divinatory sciences is examined in the minutest detail and with the coldest bigotry. Speaking as Epistemon, the King shows himself pitiless to sorcerers. At the beginning of chapter vi of Book III we read the following conversation :

> PHILOMATHUS. And now—to bring our discourse to an end, the rather as I see night falling—what affliction, think you, is deserved of these Sorcerers and Magicians, they being known for such indeed ? For I do perceive that you hold them both, one as the other, guilty in the same degree.
>
> EPISTEMON [James I]. Witches and Magicians also must be delivered to the pain of death, in this wise following the commandment of the Law of the Lord, the law civil and imperial, and the law particular, lastly, of all Christian peoples, whosoever they be.
>
> PHILOMATHUS. Yet tell me, I pray you, what manner of death must they be punished withal, as you expound it ?
>
> EPISTEMON. The death by flames of fire is that most often laid upon them. But it is

a thing indifferent [*adiaphora*] and fitting that in their own land they should undergo the manner of death enjoined by the laws and customs which there rule.

PHILOMATHUS. Think you that exception should be made or consideration taken in that they be, namely, male or female, of ripe or tender age, or by reason of their state, dignity, or degree, base or exalted?

EPISTEMON. I adjudge that there must be no exception. For it is owned that in presence of a magistrate there must be no reckoning with any consideration. Furthermore, Magic is of every kind of idolomania the most used, whence it follows that all those who commit this crime are to be punished, according to the Law of the Lord, and none shall be excepted.

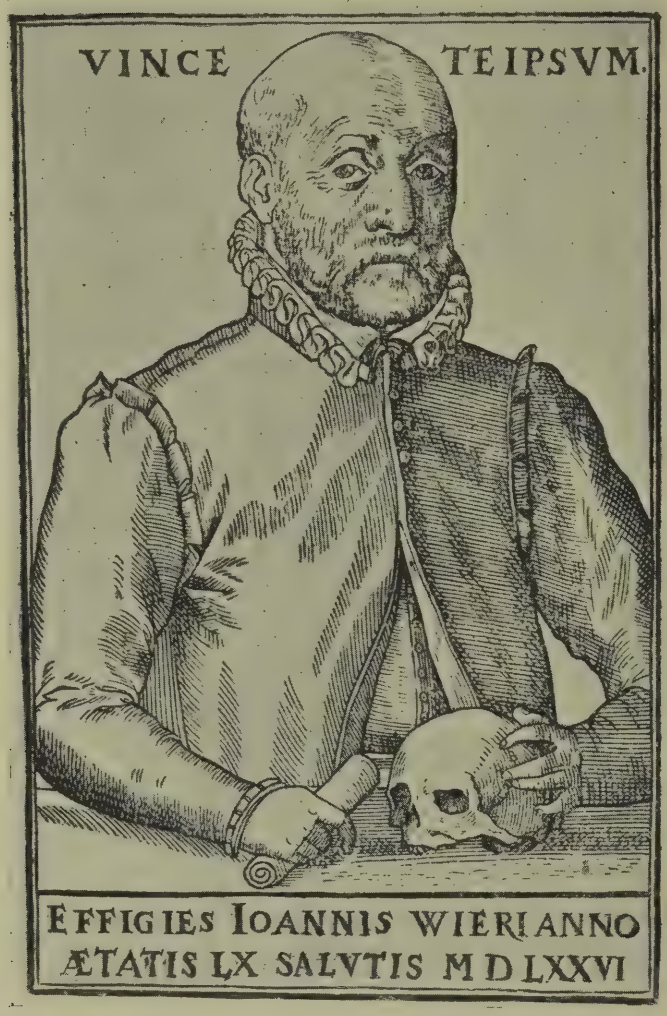


Fig. 165. JEAN WIER (1515–88), PHYSICIAN TO THE DUKE OF CLEVES
Sixteenth-century print.

Very special mention should be made here of the celebrated physician Jean Wier, born at Grave, in Brabant, 1515, died 1588, to whom we owe the very precise inventory of demons previously quoted. Judging by his engraved portrait (Fig. 165), he would seem to be a worthy man, of no great intelligence perhaps, but earnest, honest, and capable of methodical investigation; his eye has a spark of pity. He wrote his *Cinq livres de l'imposture et tromperie des diables* (Paris, 1569) with the intention of proving that those accused of sorcery were not all sorcerers, and that many of them were merely diseased and did not deserve the cruel punishments inflicted on them. Some decrease in the number of sorcerers tortured in his day would seem to be due to his benevolent efforts.

The most notorious trials of sorcery which took place in France during the seventeenth century were those of Gaufridy, the Provençal priest accused of bewitching a nun, Magdaleine de Mandols, and burned alive in 1611 at Aix after describing

a Sabbath he had attended, and of Urbain Grandier, the priest of Loudun, whose autograph pact we gave earlier (Fig. 87).

But alongside these great leading actors how many obscure players must have suffered the same fate! The archives of all the French provinces contain voluminous records of trials for sorcery which end tragically, every one of them, for the accused. A woman named Cathin confessed that she had been to the Sabbath; she was burned alive for it in Franche-Comté in 1640. Abel de la Rue was hanged at Coulommiers in 1582; he had made a pact with a demon in spaniel's shape and rendered his male neighbours impotent. In 1591 Léonarde Chastenet was burned alive in Poitou at the age of eighty, after confessing that she had cast spells on corn, been to the Sabbath, and had the Devil for a lover. Madeleine Michelle Chaudron was hanged, strangled, and burned at Geneva in 1652 for having bewitched girls and impressed the 'Devil's seal' on their bodies. An Italian priest, Benedetto Benda, was burned in the sixteenth century, also at eighty years of age, upon confessing that he had kept in his house for forty years a female demon named Hermeline, whom he took about everywhere without anyone seeing her. Berthomé du Lignon, styled Champagnat, was burned at Montmorillon in 1599 for having been to the Sabbath. René and Mathurin Bonnevault were burned at the same time for drying snakes and toads in the oven and using them in sorcery. Françoise Bos de Gueille was hanged and then burned at Gueille in 1605 for having lived a year with a demon. Françoise Secrétain was burned at Saint-Claude in Franche-Comté, by order of Boguet, for having had the Devil as lover.

If I cared to cite all those condemned on such counts whose names have survived, a figure of several hundreds would be reached. The youngest of all witches may be mentioned—little Catherine Naguille, burned at the age of eleven years; De l'Ancre has left a brief account of her adventures.

Worshippers of the Devil were spared these cruel tortures no more in the Protestant Netherlands than elsewhere, in spite of the efforts credited to the physician, Jean Wier, the results of which leave us rather sceptical. There are several prints representing the torture of witches in the dreadful collection of Jan Luyken's engraved work; I reproduce the one showing the burning of Anne Hendricks, or Heinrichs, at Amsterdam in 1571 for the crime of witchcraft (Fig. 166).

This movingly realistic document gives a saddening idea of the barbarous manners of an age still quite near our own. It shows the primitive method employed by the Amsterdam executioners for burning witches without the cost of a large fire. The condemned woman is bound to a ladder which two burly executioners are heaving over on to a fire prepared in readiness. The system was just as cruel as the imposing pyre which the sufferers had to climb right to the top, but it made less

impression on the crowd. In spite of this defect, the judge seen standing insolently in the middle distance, arms akimbo and prophetic top-hat provocatively tilted, seems to be quite satisfied with the method of torture, which he evidently finds too respectable, edifying, and national to need changing in the least.

I have already borrowed largely from another witness, Abraham Palingh. His book *'t Afgerukt Mom-Aansight der Tooverye*, published at Amsterdam in 1725,

Fig. 166. Torture of a Witch, Anne Hendricks, or Heinrichs, at Amsterdam in 1571
Print by Jan Luyken (seventeenth century).

thoroughly completes our enlightenment regarding the tortures meted out to witches in the Netherlands. We begin with the torture of the whip (Fig. 167), which was applied by children in order that they might get their hands in and learn to become executioners themselves one day. This torture was mild in comparison with that of the pincers fitted with iron spikes (Fig. 168), which were an accompaniment of the ceremony called " the question." We should note the sinister appearance of the executioner and the seriousness of the presiding conclave, recollecting that this took place at Amsterdam, a town which Descartes had praised as the pleasantest place of abode in the world.

The torture of the collar (Fig. 169) was performed by means of an instrument,

also furnished with spikes, which was held fast by the cords seen stretching to the four corners of the room. The soles of the sufferers roasted slowly meanwhile

Fig. 167. Sorcerer whipped by Children
Abraham Palingh, *'t Afgerukt Mom-Aansight der Tooverye* (Amsterdam, 1725).

Fig. 168. Torture of the Pincers inflicted on a Sorcerer
Abraham Palingh, *'t Afgerukt Mom-Aansight der Tooverye.*

over braziers of live charcoal. Sometimes the business would end in the victim succumbing under the torture (Fig. 170). This concluded the proceedings ; judges

Fig. 169. Sorcerer undergoing the Torture of the Collar
Abraham Palingh, *'t Afgerukt Mom-Aansight der Tooverye.*

Fig. 170. Sorcerer succumbing under Torture
Abraham Palingh, *'t Afgerukt Mom-Aansight der Tooverye.*

and aldermen would go off to supper, and the corpse was left to the executioner, who was charged to burn it as if it were still alive.

In Spain and Italy sorcerers accused before a court were grotesquely rigged out in a special costume consisting of a dalmatic and a mitre called the *carocha.* The engravings of Bernard Picart include the two prints here reproduced. The first

portrays a witch condemned by the Inquisition to be burned alive (Fig. 171); her dalmatic and mitre are covered with figures of demons stirring up the fires of hell, and the torture awaiting her is indicated by a woman's head set on burning coals. The other witch, on the contrary (Fig. 172), has succeeded in escaping torture. She has "avoided the fire by confessing her offences," says the inscription on the engraving.

Fig. 171. Witch condemned by the Inquisition to be burned alive
Print by Bernard Picart (eighteenth century).

Fig. 172. Witch who has escaped Burning by confessing her Offence
Print by Bernard Picart (eighteenth century).

As a result her dalmatic is only figured with the fiery tongues of the Holy Ghost, in sign of her reconciliation with God and her definite abandonment of witchcraft.

If we can trust appearances the district of Bamberg in Germany possessed most witches, for this town, careful to do things properly, had a special house called the Hexenhaus or Malefitzhaus ("House of the Witches") built to try them in, and nothing of the sort exists elsewhere, so far as we know. This house was built in 1627 by the solicitude of George Fuchs the second, of Dornheim; it has since been completely demolished, but part of its ornamentation was preserved in the Ebracher Hof at Bamberg. In its day it was considered a marvel of human workmanship.

It was at once depicted in a print, nowadays of the greatest rarity, a proof of which was sent to the Emperor, who was enthusiastic about it. The Staatsbibliothek at Bamberg has a copy, and there is another in the Museum of Tortures installed in the Fünfeckige Tower of Nuremberg Castle.

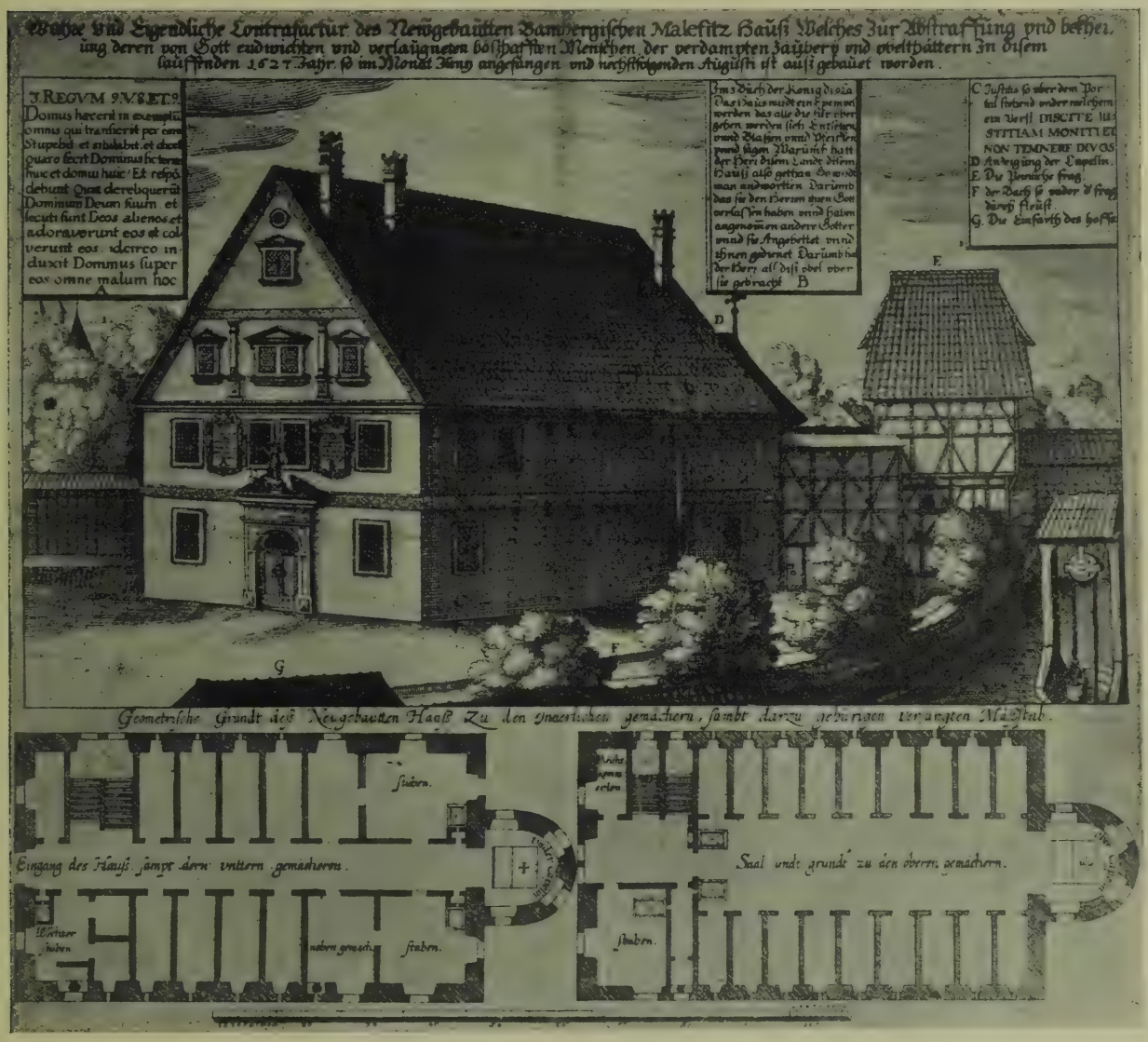


Fig. 173. The House of the Witches at Bamberg
Seventeenth-century print preserved in the Staatsbibliothek at Bamberg.

This precious document, which includes not only a dignified elevation, but a lettered plan and explanatory inscription, is reproduced in Fig. 173. On the face of the building above the entrance this line of Virgil can be read : " Discite justitiam moniti et non temnere divos." That is to say, roughly, " Learn justice, and, having learned, beware you slight not the gods ! " On two little tablets in the upper

part of the print are the Latin and German versions (to left and right respectively) of this passage from 1 Kings ix, 7, 8, and 9 :

> This house . . . shall be . . . a byword. . . . Every one that passeth by it shall be astonished, and shall hiss ; and they shall say, Why hath the Lord done thus unto this land, and to this house ? And they shall answer, Because they forsook the Lord their God, . . . and have taken hold upon other gods, and have worshipped them, and served them : therefore hath the Lord brought upon them all this evil.

The house is in two storeys, with superimposed upper and lower chapels in the rear ; the ridge of the chapel roof is seen at D. An outbuilding at E contains the torture-chamber, and a stream (F) runs underneath ; it was probably used in the forced immersion of the victims. The entrance to the courtyard is seen at G.

The left-hand portion of the plan corresponds to the ground floor. The warder's room is on the right of the entrance-hall, and eight separate cells open to left and right of the corridor leading to the chapel; each of these would take one witch. They were lighted by small windows, high up near the ceiling, which can be seen on the outer side-wall of the house. Adjoining the chapel are rooms with ante-chambers for the judges. The upper storey contains a little room called the Confession Chamber, a room for the warder, and eighteen cells.

According to this, the establishment could house twenty-six witches at a time, all separated from one another. Six enormous stoves on the German pattern were provided to give heat in winter ; three of them are visible on the ground floor—one in the warder's room and one on either side of the chapel ; the remaining three are on the first floor—one in the warder's room and two at the entrance to the Great Hall leading to the chapel.

In spite of all this comfort and the rich decoration of the external front, it is easy nowadays to understand why the municipality of Bamberg was eager to get rid of such a building.

BOOK II
MAGICIANS

I

THE JEWISH AND CHRISTIAN CABBALISTS

SO far we have considered that branch only of obscure and secret lore which was especially accursed and furtively hostile to the official teachings of the Christian religion. But, side by side with those strayed seekers into the mysterious who had deliberately chosen the path of evil, there were many possessors of occult secrets and magic formulas who lived, like the sorcerers, on the fringe of everyday life, but put or claimed to put their knowledge at the service of good.

We shall now, therefore, take final leave of the Sabbath and its maleficent, dangerous, and often disgusting practices, and proceed to study a mass of doctrines and secrets appertaining to a class of individuals who disclaimed the slightest intention of injuring their neighbour and set themselves, on the contrary, to be useful to him and favourable to all his undertakings. I speak of the magicians and adepts, who were opposed to the sorcerers and sometimes even their declared enemies.

I certainly recognize how arbitrary and artificial such a classification must be. It rests upon a very frail distinction, and we shall still repeatedly find witches and sorcerers in our path applying themselves to tasks no doubt remedial, but perfectly ready to leave them when the signal of the Sabbath comes, warning them to set off on their flight through the air. Theology, moreover, jealous of its prerogatives and its monopoly in the Divine, refused to admit that any good could come of practices which it disapproved without even examining them, and attributed them all to the sworn Enemy of God—Lucifer, Satan, or whatever his name might be. The theologian unhesitatingly jumbled magicians and witches, beshrouded with his curses, into one bundle, and hurled it out of the Church of Christ, excommunicated for ever, without troubling himself about the good intentions by which they pretended to be impelled.

Nevertheless, since this distinction is convenient and has the merit of a lucidity rare in such subjects, I shall adopt it, for want of a better, in order to gain some semblance of method, but shall hold myself free to set it aside when it becomes troublesome or illogical.

Among the shadowy practices studied in Book I we recognized influences of Latin sorcery and vestiges of Scandinavian magic which had become engrafted upon the Biblical stock represented in the Middle Ages by the Word of God.

The Judaic influence, in fact, is of chief importance in the occult sciences. Above all, it became, from the sixteenth century onward, the determinant of a particularly vital impulse which was not to slacken until about the end of the eighteenth century, and took on new vigour at the close of the nineteenth, thanks to the introduction into Christian circles of the Hebraic doctrine named Cabbala, or, more exactly, Qabbalah.

The Cabbala is a very mysterious philosophic method strangely developed in the heart of the Jewish religion. Various rabbis were the transmitters of its secrets, which remained unknown to the mass of Israelites. Its name is derived from the Hebrew *qibbel*, " to receive," and signifies " knowledge handed down by tradition." The developments of the complex doctrines composing it are contained in various books written in Hebrew, such as the *Sepher Ha Zohar*, or " Book of the Splendour," the *Sepher Jetzirah*, or " Book of the Formation," and some of the *Midraschim*, or commentaries on individual portions of the Old Testament.

One may say that the Cabbala was unknown to medieval Christians. The Jews kept it jealously to themselves up to the day when the erudite profane forced their way into the sanctuary, stripped the Hebrew language of its veils, and brought these mysterious rabbinic texts within reach of all by translating them into Latin. Among those taking part in this work were such men as Pico della Mirandola, Guillaume Postel, Reuchlin, Knorr von Rosenroth, and Pistorius.

I have no intention of expounding the Cabbala in this book. I shall merely say that its revelation introduced into the language of theology a complex vocabulary and fresh elements to which Christians attached a perhaps unmerited importance, while neglecting the profounder doctrinal points which passed them unperceived. The Cabbala supplied mysticism with such sparkling formulas as the ten *sephiroth*, or numerations, the thirty-two Ways of Wisdom, and the fifty Doors of Knowledge ; it furnished the names of many angels which make no appearance in the Bible, and, above all, it was provided with an armoury of seventy-two names of the Deity capable of seducing the imagination of seekers who had exhausted Christian theology without satisfying a curiosity ardent and avid for forbidden mysteries.

The divine names, strange enough to European ears and sometimes difficult to pronounce, were at once introduced into all the ceremonies of sorcery and magic. We have already seen them figuring in the pentacles from the *Clavicules de Salomon*, mingled with phrases of gipsy jargon, and it is in this way that the term 'cabbalistic words' has come to be applied to any incomprehensible formula pronounced with

ceremonious gravity. This same metamorphosis is further responsible for our custom of using the word 'cabbala' as an inexact synonym for 'occult sciences,' and of seeing traces of the Cabbala in all kinds of subjects which it has actually never affected at all, from cheiromancy to alchemy.

Cabbalistic iconography is very scanty. Hebrew books were poorly enough printed, as a rule, in the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries and seldom contained any illustrations. I am, however, able to give an engraving relating to the Cabbala, extracted from a book of extreme rarity by Paulus Ricius, a converted Jew, entitled *Porta Lucis hæc est porta tetragrammaton, justi intrabunt per eam.*

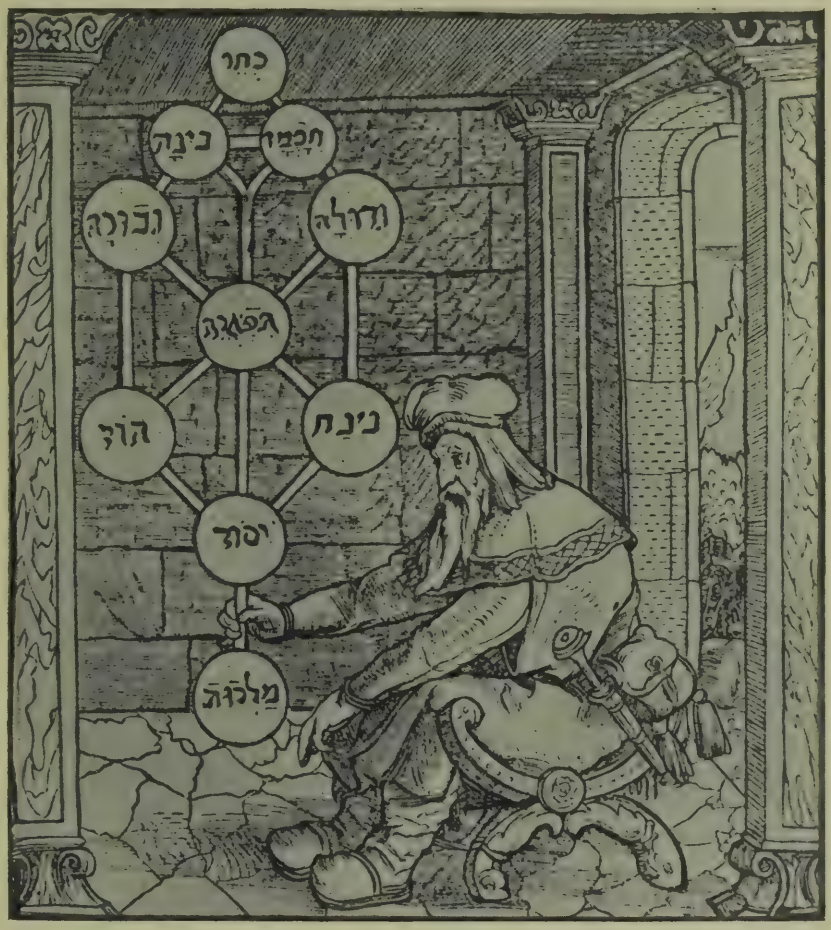


Fig. 174. Jewish Cabbalist holding the Sephirotic Tree
Paulus Ricius, *Porta Lucis hæc est porta tetragrammaton, justi intrabunt per eam* (Augsburg, 1516).
Author's collection.

The engraving (Fig. 174) represents an old Israelite, of the purest rabbinical type and initiated into all the mysteries of the Torah and the Shir ha-Shirim, holding in his hand what is called the "Sephirotic tree"—that is to say, an arrangement of the ten *sephiroth* according to the sacred order in which they spring. In the lowest circle we read *Malchut*, which means the Kingdom, and *Iesod*, the Foundation, in the one above. The next two circles read, from left to right, *Hod*, Honour, and *Nisah*, Victory. The middle circle reads *Tipheret*, which is either Comeliness or Glory. Then come, going upward and from left to right, *Geburah*, Power; *Hhesed*, Benignity or Grace; *Binah*, Intelligence; *Hhochmah*, Wisdom; and *Kether*, the Crown. Knowledge of these and other such ideas would open the doors of higher worlds to those who possessed it.

Such speculations, setting up a claim of kinship, allied themselves with the most elevated and abstruse philosophy, and it is easily conceived that they, on the one hand, set the vulgar marvelling the more in proportion as they were unintelligible, and, on the other, attracted by their novelty acute inquirers who thought they had already glimpsed some secret doctrine of the sort in Plato or the Alexandrian philosophers. The Cabbala had thus an influence on both the highest and lowest manifestations of the occult sciences, from the lofty treatises of Robert Fludd, Michel Maier, Postel, and John Dee down to the murky pages of the Black-book read before going to the Sabbath.

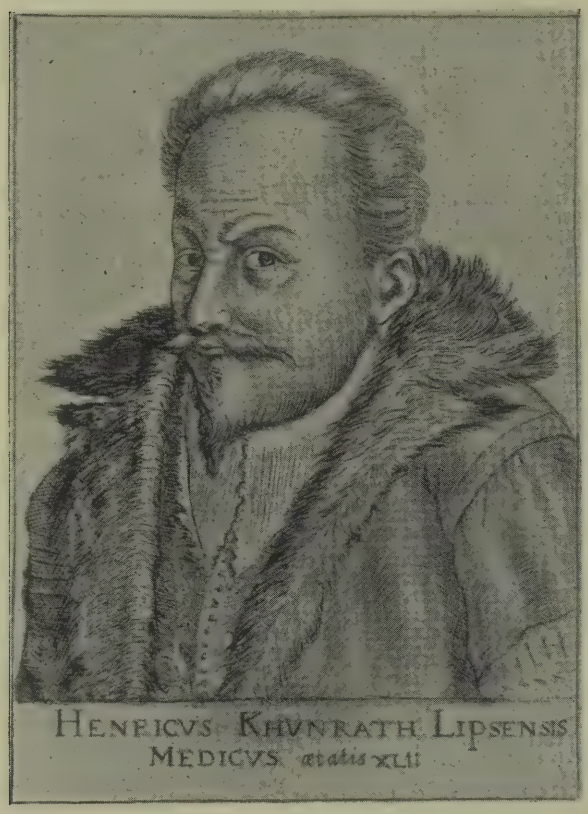


Fig. 175. Heinrich Khunrath, Physician of Leipzig and Cabbalist
Early seventeenth-century print.

As soon as the Jews lost their monopoly of the Cabbala many Christians, chiefly in the sixteenth century, undertook to incorporate the novel doctrine with Christianity, just as others had tried to Christianize Plato or Porphyry. There was, for instance, the Christian Cabbala, a curious and very little known doctrine which its advocates adapted to every branch of philosophy and by means of which they attempted to explain all the mysteries in the world, from the paths of the stars to the secret of the vital fluid which circulates in the humblest creatures.

Pico della Mirandola, Guillaume Postel, Cornelius Agrippa, John Dee, Heinrich Khunrath, Paracelsus, Van Helmont, Jakob Boehme, Gichtel, Valentin Andreæ, Michel Maier, and Robert Fludd may be regarded as the chief innovators who intermixed Christian theology with principles which were foreign to it and which it refused to admit officially. Whether through fear of persecution or from that love of secret and hidden things innate in the heart of some men, these thinkers surrounded their doctrine with an illusive mystery, declared it forbidden to the profane, and insisted that knowledge of it was reserved to a very limited number of the elect, who were made free for all eternity of the designs of Providence.

This difficulty of attaining a knowledge of Cabbalistic doctrines is very well

indicated in a picture which decorates the rare *Amphitheatrum sapientiæ æternæ christiano-kabalisticum* of Heinrich Khunrath, which I translated into French.

This author (Fig. 175)—a Leipzig physician born in Saxony about 1560, died at Dresden in 1605—was one of the most remarkable theosophists and alchemists of the

Fig. 176. The Door of the Sanctuary and the Stairway of the Sages
Heinrich Khunrath, *Amphitheatrum sapientiæ æternæ christiano-kabalisticum* (Hanau, 1609; French edition, 1899).

late sixteenth century, but he affected much obscurity in speaking of the secrets of his science. His "Door of the Sanctuary and Stairway of the Sages" (Fig. 176) shows us, with a marvellous profusion of inscriptions, what jealous guard is kept on the approaches to mysteries of magic. In the subordinate inscription he points out that "the Door of the Amphitheatre of Wisdom, the one true wisdom eternal, is narrow but august [*angusta sed tamen augusta*], consecrated by the Lord," and that

it is attained by the mystic stairway of the seven theosophic degrees, just as figured in the print. These degrees correspond to the " seven grades of Perfection " upon which Savonarola wrote a treatise (which also I have translated into French). According to the author, entrance may be gained " Christiano-Kabalically, divino-magically, and even physico-chemically " ; the curious may clear up these presumptions by perusing the actual text of Khunrath's book. All round the stairway—on which two adepts are adventuring, with a third just about to attain the final light—are quantities of Latin inscriptions. That at the summit of the arch says, " Get ye far hence, O ye profane ! " and on the lower curve is *Omnia in omnibus*—" All is in all." The big inscription on the left may be translated, " Mystery truly divine, which by right reason shall ravish with wonder and love all beholding it and those chiefly who shall consider it inwardly." The seven clear spaces radiating from the inner door are numbered ; the numerals on the first three are not very clear, but the uppermost central space is I and the next on the left and right are II and III respectively. The inscriptions on all seven run as follows : " I. Wash yourselves, be ye unsullied." " II. Have with ye the Lord, Who made all things, and the other Powers His ministers." " III. To the Highest let prayers and supplications be poured forth and to the lower Beings hymns." " IV. If an entreaty be proffered first to these Lower Ones let it be by reason only of the charge assigned to them by the Highest." " V. Let fear and reverence be messengers flying without cease from us to God and from Him to us." " VI. According as ye are tried let there be joyful obedience to those (VII) whose sacred mysteries, which thus ye come to ponder, shall be open to the worthy and hidden from the profane."

These were the moral and philosophic conditions by grace of which the adept might enter the sanctuary and know the unimpaired Light. A supplementary inscription to the right sums them up in these more concise words : " God granting, rightly to desire, to know, to be able, to be." In the section of this book relating to alchemy the reader will find another engraving (Fig. 324), " The Alchemic Citadel," also taken from the *Amphitheatrum*, which gives the impression, in connexion with alchemy, of the same difficulties awaiting the uninitiated who desire to adventure in search of the truth.

Such symbolic and hieroglyphic illustrations strongly excited the imagination of the inquiring and the curious, and conferred great repute upon those who propounded this sort of riddle. It is easy to understand the kind of terror with which people once regarded personages living a secluded life who were known to be acquainted with secrets denied to the vulgar and suspected of having sold their souls to the Devil—a final argument which was supposed to solve the mystery of their existence.

Magicians, adepts, initiates, occultists, Cabbalists—whatever they may be called—often dared a penetrating scrutiny of problems which theology approached only with trembling and admitted its inability to unravel, and they went farther and hazarded luminous explanations of these problems. Take, for instance, this diagrammatic figure of the creation of the world found in Robert Fludd's remarkable and very little known work, *Utriusque cosmi majoris et minoris historia* (Fig. 177); it is far more audacious than any of the hazy theories advanced by Fathers of the Church or medieval schoolmen.

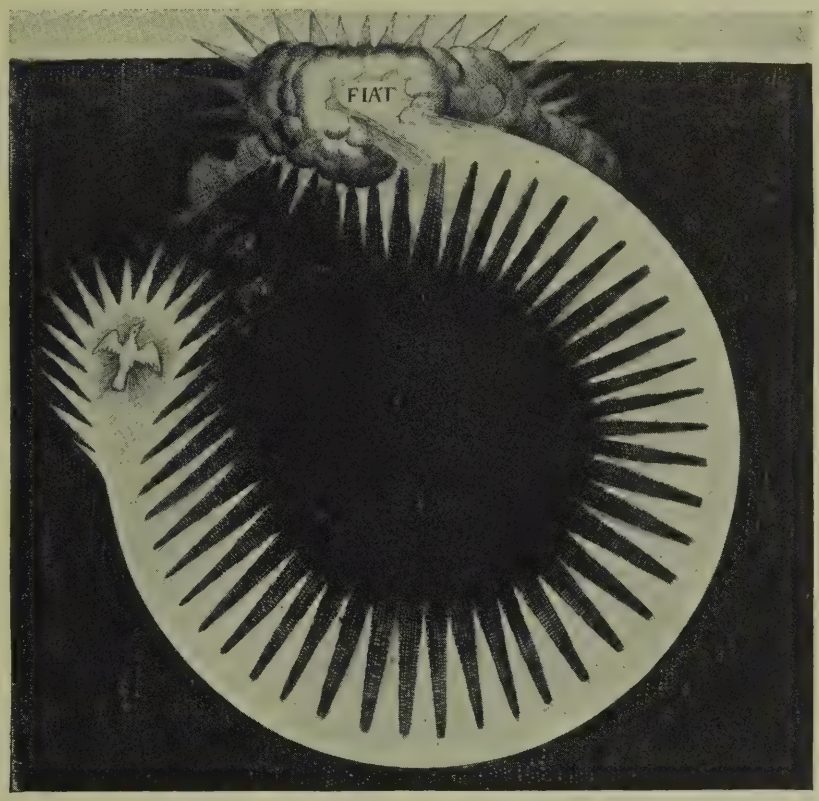


Fig. 177. The Creation of the World according to Occult Doctrine

Robert Fludd, *Utriusque cosmi maioris et minoris historia* (Oppenheim, 1619).

From a cloud representing the Father, First Person of that Divinity Whose essence is always hidden, issues the Word above all words, represented in this case by FIAT, the expression of the creative will. From these two substances of the Godhead proceeds the third—the Dove of the Holy Ghost, which flies like a breath of Ruach Elohim, the Spirit of God, and circles the Cosmos, girdling it thus with a luminous path composed of a multitude of rays, by means of which the bounds of the infinite space of darkness are set out.

Thus is one of the most disquieting problems of the Biblical doctrine explained—a doctrine which has inflamed whole generations of rabbis and Christian theologians and fomented countless celebrated heresies. In regarding God as the creator of the universe it was impossible to avoid noting that it contained practically equal amounts of good and evil, whence one is inevitably led into attributing the creation of the evil to God, source of all good. The ancient Persian doctrine circumvented the difficulty by assigning the creation of good to the Principle of

Good and of evil to the Principle of Evil, both coeternal. But neither Jews nor Christians had been able to reconcile themselves to accepting the coexistence, from the very beginning, of the Principles of Good and Evil, or to allowing Satan, as representing Evil, even an infinitesimal share in the Creation. Robert Fludd, however, cuts the knot by a graphic representation. The famous Oxford doctor considers God as the Principle of Light beyond which there is only nothingness—that is to say, non-existence—represented by Darkness. The Breath of God draws a luminous circular furrow in this Darkness, agreeably to the theory accepted by Plato, Cicero, and the Alexandrians, who pronounced that spirits must move in circles. In the circle so traced a portion of Darkness is ensphered and surrounded by Light. Thus the universe contains an evil part, of which God is not the author, bathed in the Divine Light with which it is in constant antagonism. The theory propounded thus accords with the fact of the presence of evil in the world and with the incorruptible purity of God, which the theologians by no means wished to see disputed ; it also has the advantage of being clearer and more ingenious than the " limitations " of the rabbins, which are expounded in the *Adumbratio Kabbalæ Christianæ*, a book I have translated into French.

Completely ignoring the Copernican hypothesis, although it was by then seventy years old, Robert Fludd continues his iconography of the mystery of the creation with a figure (Fig. 178) perfectly in agreement with Biblical notions and the cosmography of the Greeks. The picture illustrates the formation of the universe, or what adepts, using a familiar Cabbalistic expression, call the Macrocosm, or Great World, as opposed to the Microcosm, or Little World, which is man, the epitome of the universe. The solid element, the terrestrial globe, occupies the centre ; it is surrounded successively by the liquid element, peopled by fishes ; the element of air, traversed by birds ; and the element of fire. Beyond these, again, are the circles of the seven planets, the heaven of the fixed stars, and lastly the empyrean, or Abode of the Blessed. At the top of the design the Dove of the Holy Ghost encloses the created universe with the circle of its flight.

The most punctilious theology could find nothing to reprove in this figure ; it would not be quite the same, perhaps, with the next, given by the same author (Fig. 179). This represents the Mirror of Nature and the image of Art. The arrangement is the same as in the previous picture. The earth is surrounded by the elements, the astronomical spheres, and the empyrean. But two new factors are introduced. Nature is one of them ; she is represented by a woman crowned with stars, like the Virgin, and bearing the crescent moon of Diana upon her body. She holds her power directly from the Lord, one of Whose arms is seen extended from a cloud. The Divine name in four letters shines on the surface of the cloud. The

Fig. 178. The Universe wholly Created
Robert Fludd, *Utriusque cosmi ma oris et minoris historia.*

Lord keeps Nature in His power by a chain fastened to her arm, but she in her turn holds the Art of mankind (the second new factor) by another chain. Art is wholly subject to her, and is represented by an ape, in order to show that man, with all his wise and subtle knowledge, will never be more than the ape of Nature. Art is seated upon the terrestrial globe, which he has made his own ; he is measuring a small copy of it with a pair of callipers. The whole of his surroundings show the results of the sophistications by which he has transformed the elements and altered the surface of the globe. The four elements have become the animal, vegetable, and mineral kingdoms ; animals and plants have been classified, metals extracted from the bowels of the earth. Man has discovered geomancy, mathematics, music, painting, and the art of fortification ; he has measured time and constructed clocks, " improved Nature in the mineral kingdom " by employing retort and cucurbit distillation, " helped Nature in the vegetable kingdom " by cultivating the soil and grafting, and " supplemented Nature in the animal kingdom " by the art of medicine and the rearing of bees and domestic poultry. We see here how the learned who claimed to be ' initiate ' opposed the purely analytic science of such as Bacon and Newton with synthetic schemes by which they strove to link all phenomena to one great vital principle. They thought they could arrive at knowledge of this principle by philosophic speculation, contemplation, and even ecstasy.

Sometimes, certainly, we see adepts far ahead of the theologians, showing themselves the forerunners of doctrines which the latter were not to enunciate till long afterward. It is known that the form of devotion connected with the Sacred Heart of Jesus was introduced into the Catholic Church in the seventeenth century by Ste Marguerite Marie Alacoque. She was born in 1647 ; entered the Convent of the Visitation in 1671, and caused the first consecration to be given by the Révérend Père Claude de la Colombière on Friday, June 21, 1675, the solemn date which is officially dignified as the birthday of the new devotion. Certain experts have considered that Ste Marguerite Marie was acquainted with the *Opuscula* of Thomas Goodwin, Oliver Cromwell's chaplain, which were published at Heidelberg in 1658. The second of these *Opuscula* is entitled *Cor Christi in cœlis erga peccatores in terris.* But no one has hitherto remarked that two exact representations of the symbolism of the Sacred Heart are given in a book on alchemic Cabbalism by L'Agneau, entitled *Harmonie mystique, ou accord des philosophes chymiques.* At the end of the volume is the double plate here represented (Fig. 180), which shows two figures of the Divine Heart of different origins. L'Agneau's book is dated 1636—that is, eleven years before the birth of Ste Marguerite Marie—but the hieroglyphs it contains originated in two memorials dating from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The first, on the left, was once to be found at the Convent of the Cordeliers in Paris, on the

Fig. 179. Nature and her Ape, Art, according to the Adepts
Robert Fludd, *Utriusque cosmi majoris et minoris historia.*

stained-glass windows of the Hall of Theology ; then, in succession, on one of the cloister walls of the Jacobins, on a stained-glass window in the Chapel of St Thomas Aquinas, and lastly in four different places in the Saint-Michael Chapel of the Church of the Carmelites—seven representations in all, that is to say, some of which certainly belonged to the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. To the right of the plate is one of the famous designs from the Charnier des Innocents, of which I shall have

Fig. 180. Anticipatory Representation of the Sacred Heart in Two Alchemical Hieroglyphs

L'Agneau, *Harmonie mystique, ou Accord des philosophes chymiques* (Paris, 1636).

occasion to speak later on. Their inception was due to the celebrated Parisian alchemist Nicolas Flamel, who flourished at the beginning of the fifteenth century. They all had an alchemic signification, and I shall discuss them in detail when we come to deal with the Philosopher's Stone. But, as all the symbols connected with transmutation necessarily had a theological relation, it is completely evident that the bleeding Heart placed at the intersection of the arms of the Cross of Salvation and surrounded by that essential emblem of Jesus, the Crown of Thorns, is an authentic anticipatory representation of the Sacred Heart due, not to theologians, but to an

TITLE-PAGE OF "LA TRÈS SAINTE TRINOSOPHIE"

This is a Cabbalistic manuscript (eighteenth century) attributed to the Comte de Saint-Germain.

Bibliothèque de Troyes, Manuscript No. 2400

obscure and intangible group of hermetic philosophers who left many traces in Europe about the end of the Middle Ages. Note that the flowered twig springing from the Heart symbolizes revivification, presumably in both the general and the chemical sense of the word.

The analogy is still more striking if we compare these two figures with that drawn at a later date—1685—by Ste Marguerite Marie herself at the Monastery of Paray-le-Monial (Fig. 181). This little-known design is preserved at the Monastery of the Visitation in Turin, and must have been intended by the Saint for the official image of the Sacred Heart exactly as it ought to be shown in all churches; but her wish has not been respected, for this image is nowhere seen. As the reproduction shows, there is the same arrangement as in the engravings from L'Agneau. The Crown of Thorns surrounds the flaming Heart; the Cross rises in place of the twig, and the 'initiates' who had most profoundly penetrated the mysteries of the Absolute, the most fervent alchemists, would have no difficulty in recognizing this sketch for a genuine hermetic design.

Fig. 181. The Sacred Heart of Jesus
Drawn by Ste Marguerite Marie herself, 1685.
Monastery of the Visitation at Turin.

Among many others, who need not be named, let me finally cite Jakob Boehme, the German shoemaker-theologian who combined the notions of the Cabbala with the most elevated speculations of Christian mysticism. He was born in 1575, and died in 1624. He diffused his doctrine among none but a very small number of adepts, and remained almost unknown until toward the end of the nineteenth century, when numerous editions of his works, in all languages, rescued him from oblivion. I give a very old portrait of this eminent theosopher (Fig. 182), engraved in the seventeenth century by J. B. Bruhl, of Leipzig, which shows the man whose disciples regarded him as a saint in the characteristic posture of beatitude. He is surrounded by pentacles and special alchemico-cabbalistic emblems epitomizing his extremely abstract doctrine, in which the mysteries of religion and the principles of magic were constantly correlated.

The last part of the eighteenth century brings us, in conclusion, to a new race of mere superficial Cabbalists such as the Comte de Saint-Germain and Cagliostro, who spread a kind of dechristianized Cabbalism mingled with Oriental elements of debatable value. It looks almost as if the approaching decipherment of the Egyptian hieroglyphics was foreseen, since we find that Egypt is all the fashion. In the seventeenth century the *Œdipus Ægyptiacus* of Père Kircher had already provided a fantastic key for reading the hieroglyphics ; then Court de Gébelin seized upon the tarot and turned it into the *Book of Thoth*, and after that everybody at

Fig. 182. Jakob Boehme
J. B. Bruhl of Leipzig (seventeenth century).

once began to Egyptianize everything. It was under such influences that the famous manuscript in the library at Troyes was drafted and painted. I refer to *La Très Sainte Trinosophie* (No. 2400), attributed to the Comte de Saint-Germain. It is decorated with twelve beautiful illuminations which render it the most precious known manuscript of occultism.

The volume was bought at a sale of Masséna's effects. The calligraphy is skilful, and in a note in the front the philosopher, under the name of I. B. C. Philotaume, states that the manuscript belonged to him and that it was the sole existing copy of the famous *Trinosophie* of the Comte de Saint-Germain, which the Comte himself destroyed on one of his journeys. The note adds that Cagliostro had owned the volume, but that the Inquisition had seized it at his house in Rome when he was arrested at the end of 1789. Cagliostro and his wife had visited the Comte de Saint-Germain at a castle in Holstein. *La Très Sainte Trinosophie* is nothing but a book of the Cabbalized alchemy which we shall discuss later. It contains a number of

Hebrew inscriptions borrowed from the Cabbala, various hieroglyphics, and even some characters in sham cuneiform. The illuminated title-page of this superb manuscript is reproduced in the plate facing p. 216; the various symbols forming the framework present a kind of synopsis of the hermetic science.

At the top is the Judaic triangle, containing the Divine Name in four letters. The circle drawn in a square, which encloses the title, is also a symbol well known to Cabbalists; it stands for the spark of divine fire hidden in matter and animating it with the fire of life. The Hebrew name El is on the right, with another Divine name lower down written in Arabic; the letters AB near the latter are indicative of the alphabet and represent the Word—the Divine Word. On the left is a Hebrew inscription taken from the first verses of the Book of Genesis: "And the earth was without form, and void [*Tohu-va-Bohu*]; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God [*Ruach Elohim*] moved upon the face of the waters." Further on I shall explain the other purely alchemistic symbols of this illumination; for the moment it will suffice to state that the author of the *Trinosophie* is faithful to the synthetic method of his predecessors, and relies, just as they did, upon the Biblical account of the formation of the Cosmos in order to explain, in the traditional way of the Cabbalists, the principles of the science he sets out to expound.

II

ASTROLOGY AND THE MACROCOSM

N all times the universe has presented itself to mankind as a page at once luminous and enigmatic, the decipherment of which would every moment reveal fresh glimpses, open unexpected and limitless horizons, and furnish an excuse for inexhaustible commentaries.

In medieval Europe official teaching had to some extent codified the study of the universe in limiting to two sources the explanations which could be given of its phenomena. The first source was the Bible, read in the Latin of the Vulgate ; the second the logical and rationalist philosophy of Aristotle, which was referred to for all the physical details unmentioned in the Bible.

Such a science, if indeed it can be called by that name, left very little scope for the imagination. Experiment could have corrected and completed it, but was difficult, costly, and ill-equipped at that period. And as it is impossible to still the activity of the human mind in those privileged beings who have received the priceless gift of observation and are consumed with a burning curiosity to understand whatever eludes them, we must not be surprised at the currency of an impalpable, indefinite, and secret doctrine. Nowadays we call this doctrine magic, hermetism, esoterism, or occultism, but then it had no name at all. It was current among learned individualists who were in revolt against the subjection of the intellect to rule, and was transmitted in secret by mysterious personages whose works we now find astonishing because they are saturated with a singularly profound and daring spirit of speculation, as compared with contemporaneous scholastic productions.

This doctrine was a compound of the remnants of all the enlightenments which had preceded Christianity and were supposed to be extinguished by its advent. The adepts of that esoterism which terrified the tranquil, placid citizens of the Middle Ages had imported into the doctrine whatever remained of the antique philosophies of Pythagoras and Hermes Trismegistus, whose books, filled with mysteries as they were, still retained a considerable repute. Not content with their compound, the adepts had mixed in the science of the ancient Greeks and the Alexandrian philosophers ; had amalgamated the speculations of Cicero's *Somnium Scipionis* with the astrological theories of Julius Maternus Firmicus, Ptolemy, and Manetho ; and, lastly, had imbibed the ideas of the Arab writings—whose effulgence was that of so many indecipherable Black-books—and thus came to link up with the strange

speculations of the Jews. These, reading the Bible as they did, not in the Vulgate but in the Hebrew text, had found in it the whole mystic philosophy of the Talmud and Cabbala, which eluded Christian commentators.

Two main ideas dominate this strange mixture of learning.

The universe, or Cosmos, is an immense organic being, all the parts of which are interlinked. It is the Macrocosm, or Great World, in contrast to man, who is the Microcosm, or Little World. All the parts of the Great World are subject to the same laws ; they function in similar ways, and it is thus easy to arrive at comprehension of them by means of analogy, " Divine Analogy," the universal law which governs all beings. That which is above is like that which is below. The lower is like the higher. In consequence, whoever knows one part of the Macrocosm knows, by analogy, all the parts. He also knows the Microcosm, which is like the Macrocosm and has a corresponding part for every like part of it. The adept can thus arrive at a perception of hidden things not known to the vulgar by the synthetic method put at his disposal by the universe itself, and this method raises him to such a height of knowledge as makes him almost a god.

The second notion, in perfect correlation with the above, is that the Creator of all things, in the plenitude of His eternal existence, which knows nothing of the sorry accidents we designate past and future, but includes them in a unique and indivisible present, has founded all the laws which govern the Macrocosm and the Microcosm upon a type likewise unique. What is to take place in what we call the future is, by analogy, exactly like what has taken place in the past. All the events which are to happen have been fixed and determined in advance from all eternity ; they are written in the Divine Thought as in a book, and to be able to read this book is the supreme knowledge reserved to adepts who hold the key to the true constitution of the Cosmos and apply the law of analogy.

It is easy to realize, therefore, that knowledge of the future, which the Church dared not even check in any definite manner, may have been the dream, sometimes daring, often consolatory, haunting the brain of all those who adventured in the occult. Hence the countless methods of divination practised in the Middle Ages by all classes of society, often by the holiest personages even. I shall have occasion to enumerate them further on.

But the first place must beyond dispute be accorded to astrology, the most ancient and noble of them all.

Knowledge of the future through the stars was at the foundation, so to speak, of the whole secret doctrine. It had the advantage of being in conformity with the diverse philosophies of the Greeks and Romans ; it was found practised in the remotest times among the Egyptians and Chaldeans ; it agreed with the Cabbala

and the experimental science of the Arabs, who showed themselves the most skilful of all in their knowledge of the stars, and, to justify the practice of their art, astrologers even invoked the great authority of the Bible, behind which they would hasten to shelter as a defence against the theologians. Was it not said in Genesis (i, 14), " Fiant luminaria in firmamento cœli ut sint in signa et tempora " ? That is, " Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven . . . ; and let them be for signs, and for seasons." The word " signs " in the sacred text is quite separate from the word " seasons," which, by itself, marks the divisions of the day. The stars, then, mark the division of time, but they are likewise " signs." Signs of what, if not of the events which may happen in the Macrocosm as well as in the Microcosm ? And since in the divine plan past, present, and future make but a single instant, it follows that all the future is written in the stars for the one who knows how to read.

I shall not here discuss the opinions of the two opposed schools of astrology, one of which asserted that the stars were no other than " signatures " indicating simply the events in the lives of men, while the other asserted that the stars had a veritable " influence " upon the human body and all beings in general. Neither shall I enter into the minute detail of the delicate processes of astrology, which can be found in any number of modern books.

Let us recall merely that in the midst of the heaven of the fixed stars the ancients had established the existence of seven mobile celestial bodies, which they called planets—the Sun, the Moon, Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn. They had marked them all distinctively by traditional symbols—the complete system is shown in Fig. 178—thus : the Sun ☉, the Moon ☾, Mercury ☿, Venus ♀, Mars ♂, Jupiter ♃, Saturn ♄. Among the fixed constellations they had then ascertained twelve groups of stars, in which, they had discovered, the sun rose above the horizon successively during the full course of a year ; these twelve constellations formed a broad band or girdle, called the Zodiac, in the celestial sphere ; they too are distinguished by traditional symbols. Their names and corresponding symbols are as follows :

The Ram ♈	The Lion ♌	The Archer ♐
The Bull ♉	The Virgin ♍	The Goat ♑
The Twins ♊	The Scales ♎	The Water-carrier ♒
The Crab ♋	The Scorpion ♏	The Fishes ♓

The angular distances from time to time subsisting between the planets in the celestial vault are called ' aspects '; the interpretation of these aspects forms the basis of astrology. The following are the chief of them :

Conjunction ☌	when two or more planets are found together in the same sign of the Zodiac.						
Semi-sextile ⚺	when two planets are				30	degrees	apart.
Semi-quartile ∠	,,	,,	,,	,,	45	,,	,,
Sextile ✶	,,	,,	,,	,,	60	,,	,,
Quartile □	,,	,,	,,	,,	90	,,	,,
Trine △	,,	,,	,,	,,	120	,,	,,
Sesquiquartile ⚼	,,	,,	,,	,,	135	,,	,,
Quincunctile ⚻	,,	,,	,,	,,	150	,,	,,
Opposition ☍	,,	,,	,,	,,	180	,,	,,

Conjunction is sometimes good, sometimes evil; opposition, quartile, and semi-quartile are always evil; trine is favourable.

Lastly, the whole of celestial space is divided into twelve parts called houses; each part includes thirty degrees of the Zodiac and corresponds to a particular phase of human life. The first house contains the stars about to rise above the eastern horizon, and is called the ascendant.

In order to interpret a horoscope it is necessary to know the influences of the planets, the signs of the Zodiac, and the astrological houses, and of the various aspects of the planets and their position in the different signs of the Zodiac. It is very difficult to form a conception of the resulting complications unless one has practised the art.

According to the *Géomance abrégée* of J. B. de la Taille de Bondaroy (Paris, 1574) and the *Géomancie astronomique* of Gerard of Cremona (Paris, 1679), the Moon, Mercury, Mars, and Saturn are generally malefic in their influence; the Sun, Jupiter, and Venus generally benefic.

The Moon is the planet of brooding and melancholy; she is friendly to the Sun and hostile to Mars. Mercury is the planet of commerce and the arts; he is friendly to Jupiter and hostile to Saturn. Venus is the planet of love; she is friendly to Mars and hostile to Saturn. The Sun presides over glory and terrestrial riches; he is hostile to Mercury and Saturn. Mars presides over war and battles; he is hostile to the Moon and Mercury and friendly to Venus. Jupiter is concerned with honours and physical beauty; he is hostile to Mars. Saturn, lastly, is the most inauspicious and malefic of all the planets; he foretells accidents, violent deaths, and disasters.

But the influence of these different planets is modified according as they are in conjunction, opposition, or other aspects. They can combine two and two, three and three, four and four. A book by the Seigneur of Salerno, *La Géomancie et la néomancie des anciens* (Paris, 1688), tells us that this is why

> Conjunctions of the Moon and Mars are nothing worth in respect of the good things of fortune, and more, they bring accidents such as sword-strokes and bullet-wounds. In

respect to women they indicate weakness of mind and bloody fluxes. The double conjunction of Venus and the Moon produces extreme lubricity, brings venereal disease, and causes women of quality to become enamoured of menservants, etc.

Furthermore, each of these planets or of these combinations of planets changes in meaning according as it is found in one or another of the twelve houses. Thus, Gerard of Cremona says that " Jupiter in the first house signifies prelates, bishops, nobles, potentates, judges, philosophers, sages, merchants, and bankers." In other words, those who are born under this sign are predestined to one of the avocations named, and so on for the other eleven houses. Mars, again, in the first house, " signifies warriors, incendiaries, murderers, physicians, barbers, butchers, goldsmiths, cooks, bakers, and all occupations making use of fire." We see that eighty-four different combinations are obtained in this way.

But the twelve signs of the Zodiac have still to be reckoned with. The influence of the planets is modified by them according to that one of the twelve houses in which they are found. For instance, " The Bull being in the ascendant, the person will be vain " ; the Archer being in the second house (the house of health), " the eldest son will bear his brothers hatred, and they in return will speak evil of him among themselves " ; the Scales in the seventh house (the house of life) " means good fortune in agreements and business and in the practice of astronomical medicine " ; in the fourth house (the house of kindred) " it means good fortune in marriage treaties."

The collection of all the combinations possible would produce an enormous volume. The ancients have left us a considerable treasury of astrological works dealing with this subject, and I shall content myself with citing the following : the *Apotelesmatica* of Manetho, an important Greek poem attributed to a sacrificant and keeper of archives at the temple of Heliopolis in Egypt about the year 263 B.C. ; the *Tetrabiblos* and *Karpos* of Ptolemy, another Egyptian, of Alexandria, who lived about A.D. 130 ; the *Astronomica* of Manilius, a poet contemporaneous with Augustus ; the *Liber Matheseos* of Julius Maternus Firmicus, fourth century A.D. ; the Arabic treatises of Alchabitius, Albumazar, and Hali ; the works of the Renaissance astrologers Johannes Angelus, Heinrich Rantzau, Auger Ferrier, Richard Roussat, Jean Eschiud, and Joseph Grünpeck—and, above all, the *Speculum astrologiæ* of François Junctin (Lyons, 1583) and the *Astrologia Gallica* of Jean Baptiste Morin, published at The Hague in 1661 by the house of Vlacq. Readers desirous of thoroughly investigating the complex principles of the science of the stars will find in these various works all the details which I cannot give here.

The diagram of the state of the heavens at the time of an individual's birth or of any event whatever was called an ' astral scheme,' a ' scheme of nativity,' or a ' horo-

scope.' During the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, and even the seventeenth century, at the moment of birth of persons of quality an astronomer would be employed without fail to draw up their scheme of nativity—that is to say, an exact abstract of the state of the heavens at the precise instant of birth. Interpreting the scheme, the astrologer would then find in it indications as to the character, morals, and state of health of the subject, the maladies with which he or she would be afflicted, and all the events, happy or unhappy, which life would bring. The date of death would be found clearly indicated, especially if it were to be a violent death.

As a matter of curiosity the horoscope of Louis XIV is reproduced just as it is given in *Astrologia Gallica*, the great work of the celebrated astrologer J. B. Morin of Villefranche (Fig. 183). I cannot here go into the complicated details presented by the reading of such a figure, and shall merely say that the twelve triangles composing it are the twelve houses; the first house, called the ascendant, is the middle triangle on the left, and the triangle immediately below this is the second house; the third follows in the same order, and so on counter-clockwise all round the figure.

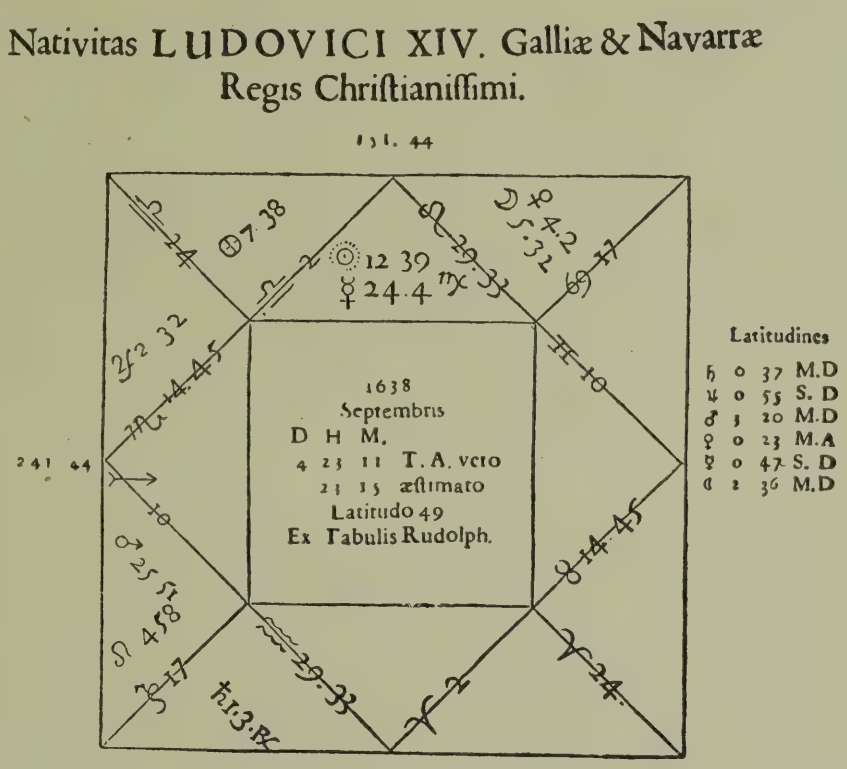


Fig. 183. The Horoscope of Louis XIV
J. B. Morin of Villefranche, *Astrologia Gallica* (The Hague, 1661).

This horoscope shows Mars in the second house, which controls worldly goods and gains, and this presages a martial and wealthy reign. Saturn in the third house, which is that of parents, brothers, and sisters, indicates the inextricable family difficulties in which Louis XIV was entangled all his life. The tenth house, called the house of mid-heaven, is that governing the profession of the subject, and it is very remarkable in this case. It shows the Sun under the malefic influence of Mercury, which foretells that the subject will attain the highest worldly honours and lead an

existence incredible in its grandeur, but in the final result more unlucky than useful. The special sign seen in the eleventh house, called 'the part of fortune,' shows that Louis XIV was to be especially happy in his choice of the Ministers, counsellors, and great men surrounding him.

I might complete this rudimentary interpretation by taking account of the aspects of the planets and their position in the Zodiac and so forth, so arriving at a more precise result; but this would necessitate going into technical details too numerous to find room here.

Astrology gained such credit among men of all peoples of the world that it was the only branch of occult science which the Church dared not formally condemn. In reading all the Fathers and doctors of the Church, from St Augustine to St Thomas Aquinas, it is perceptible that their teaching on this subject is hesitant. They disapprove without completely rejecting; they do not deny the accuracy of horoscopes, and they do not attribute the creation of this science absolutely to the Devil, as they would have done boldly if any other processes tainted with superstition had been involved. Can the future be foretold? That is a heavy question for a theologian. There in the Bible are Joseph, the Witch of Endor, Daniel interpreting the *Mene*, *Mene*, *Tekel*, *Upharsin*, and other prophets, and they all foretold the future. Hence the future is determined in advance within the prescience of God, and so becomes a fatality which man cannot escape. Nevertheless, according to theology, man possesses free-will, and the Divine Grace is never refused him. He is free to choose between good and evil. But God knows in advance what man will choose; therefore He Himself has determined it. Or say He does not know it; then He does not know everything, and is not omniscient. The problem, according to theological notions, is insoluble.

The Christian religion knew very well that to admit the fatalism of the astrologer would be to favour the Jansenist doctrine of predestination, and that the Church refused to do, without advancing any very valid logical reason for its refusal. The astrologers, on their part, boldly upheld the thesis of fatality. Many persons, seeing various unfortunate events predicted for them in their horoscopes, strove to avoid any circumstances capable of inducing such events. For example, if the horoscope said that the subject would perish by shipwreck he would take pains never to go on the sea or even cross a river. But, said the astrologers, this is seeking to avoid the unavoidable. None can escape his fate, and any efforts made with this intention will, on the contrary, help to bring about the fatal event. Otherwise, if one could avoid what the horoscope foretells it would then be giving an indication of something which is to be but will not be, and the very foundations of astrology would be destroyed.

Molière, who hated astrologers at least as much as he did doctors, took good care—in Scene I of the third act of *Les Amants magnifiques*—to display the supposed perplexity of astrologers in face of the doctrine of free-will, which he treats as an indisputable truth.

Here are the remarks he puts into the mouths of the astrologer Anaxarchus and his interlocutors :

ANAXARCHUS. The proofs, madame, of the infallibility of my predictions which every one has seen are sufficient warranty of the promises that I am able to make. But when I have shown what the heavens design in your regard you will still go by it as you are inclined, and it will be for you to choose this hazard or that.

ERIPHILE. Will the heavens, Anaxarchus, show both the chances awaiting me ?

ANAXARCHUS. Yes, madame ; the felicities which will attend you if you marry the one and the afflictions which will burden you if you marry the other.

ERIPHILE. But as it is impossible for me to marry both, not only what is to happen, but what is not to happen must be written in the heavens.

CLITIDAS (*aside*). And now the astrologer is in a fix !

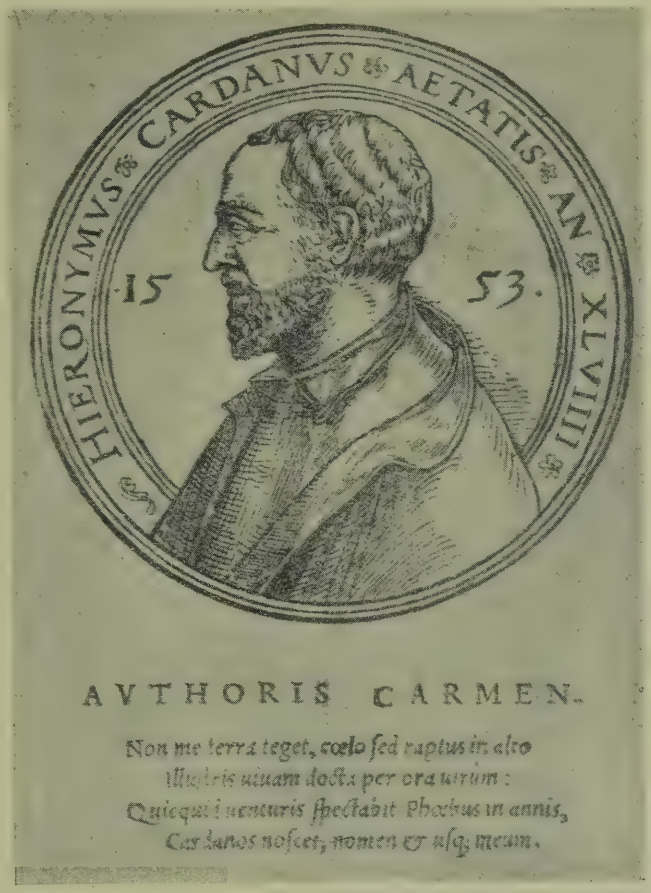


Fig. 184. PORTRAIT OF JEROME CARDAN AT THE AGE OF FORTY-EIGHT
Anonymous wood-engraving, 1553.

Molière has employed a subterfuge here in ascribing to Anaxarchus language which no astrologer would ever have employed, unless he were a mere irresponsible charlatan. The astrologer was very careful to refrain from offering a choice between this or that fortune ; he would indicate no more than the one destiny which it was impossible to avoid.

One of the most curious cases of this necessity of suffering an inexorable fate without being able to avoid it—a case, incidentally, which caused a good deal of ink to be spilt in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries—is that of the famous scholar Jerome Cardan (Fig. 184). He was a mathematician, and discovered the formula for the resolution of equations of the third degree, but this did not prevent him

from being a great amateur of astrology. Having seen the exact date of his death in his horoscope, he allowed himself to die of starvation at the age of seventy-five, in order to fulfil the horoscope and avoid falsifying astrology.

And so it was free-will which enabled destiny to accomplish itself, said the partisans of free-will; but their opponents maintained that the fatal event would have happened in any case, and that it was written in the Book of Fate that Cardan was to die of starvation, whatever might be the cause of this manner of death.

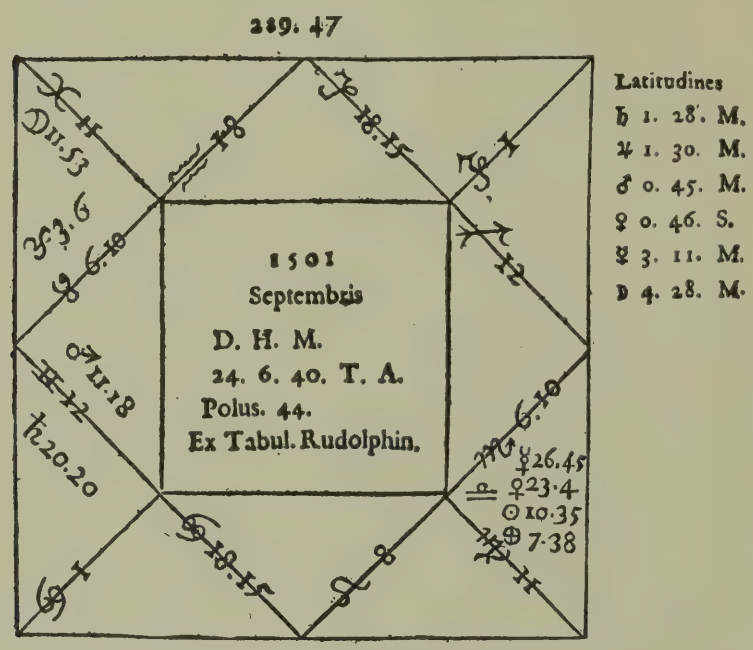


Fig. 185. Jerome Cardan's Horoscope
J. B. Morin of Villefranche, *Astrologia Gallica.*

Unluckily, the facts are hard to verify, since there is some uncertainty as to the exact date of Cardan's death. De Thou asserts that it took place on September 1, 1575, while Bayle claims that he was still writing his autobiography, *De Vita propria*, in October 1576. Cardan was born at Pavia in 1501. His horoscope, just as it is given in J. B. Morin's *Astrologia Gallica*, is shown in Fig. 185. If it is exact it does not seem to me that it can have sufficed to reveal to Cardan the precise year of his death. Morin, besides, sifts it very shrewdly. It shows Mars (♂) in the ascendant; his aspect with Saturn (♄), who is in the second house, is the malefic semi-quartile, and with Mercury (☿), almost in opposition. This evidently presages a violent death. We note also that Mercury in the sign of the Scales (♎) decisively indicates a predisposition for mathematics. But the greater probability is that Cardan made different horoscopes for different years, and announced his death for a year of which the horoscope seemed to him particularly inauspicious.

In order to cast horoscopes astrologers had to go into tremendously long and complicated calculations, which were presently simplified, in harmony with the progress of astronomical science, by the publication of tables and ephemerides giving the state of the heavens successively for the whole twenty-four hours day by day throughout every year. In the seventeenth century the Rodolphine Tables were

employed and quoted by several astrologers. A diagram from a manuscript in the Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, representing a necromantic bell, which needs the intervention of a planetary spirit, has been previously reproduced (Fig. 144). The wording below the diagram mentions the *Ephémérides de Masavaqua*, or the *Suputation des Temps*, " thereby to know what was the position of the planets at the hour of your birth in the country where you were born "; we know nothing further of these publications. Modern astrologers, however, make use of Raphael's *Ephemerides*, which appear yearly in England and save them all calculation. So that to-day we have astrologers—unlikely as it may seem—who never look at the sky, do not even know the stars, never put an eye to a telescope, and would be much embarrassed if asked to point out a single planet or constellation. They simply consult books and cast horoscopes by the figures they find in them.

It was not so formerly. Every astrologer, under penalty of being unable to exercise his calling, was obliged to understudy an astronomer. In the absence of all lists and tables he was forced to cast a horoscope at the subject's very moment of birth by directly observing the state of the heavens. If he did not do so the calculations necessary for ascertaining this state several years later would be almost insuperably difficult. In the case of births which took place during the day an observation of the heavens was made twelve hours afterward at the corresponding moment of the night, and a subtraction made which every astronomer could easily perform.

The oldest representation known to us of astronomers studying the state of the heavens is that found in the splendid pack of tarot cards preserved at the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris under the name of the Tarot of Charles VI. The pack, which is unluckily incomplete, dates from the beginning of the fifteenth century. The card traditionally called the Moon shows two astrologers (Fig. 186) determining the Moon's altitude by means of ordinary compasses and entering the measurements obtained in a notebook.

The simplicity of the means employed will be remarked; they were hardly to vary two centuries later. The astrologer seen in one of the frontispieces (Fig. 187) of Fludd's work, *Utriusque cosmi historia*, is as destitute of instruments as his colleagues of the fourteenth century. This pretty picture represents one of the most curious of those very rare scenes which relate to astrology. The astrologer is in his observatory, a spacious, open gallery looking out over the countryside. He is casting a horoscope for a man seated before him, who appears to be a peasant. Upon the table are an inkpot, an armillary sphere, and the inevitable compasses, and the operator is erecting his scheme on the paper in front of him without resorting even to this primitive instrument. Pen in hand and one finger held up against the sky, he is reading off the constellations direct and transcribing all their

Fig. 186. Astrologers of the Fifteenth Century
Tarot card said to have belonged to Charles VI.
Bibliothèque Nationale, Cabinet des Estampes.

indications upon the scheme, where the outlines of the twelve houses are clearly distinguishable. There is no other apparatus, and above all no telescope, which so many illustrators, by an absurd anachronism, persist in putting into the hands of astrologers.

Every one knows the pictures, so widely disseminated among the public, illustrating those pedlars' books which contain debased occultist formulas for popular consumption. They never fail to depict the classic astrologer, in a pointed hat and a robe painted with the signs of the Zodiac, looking at the sky through an enormous telescope. Nothing could be more erroneous or ridiculous. The pointed hat of the physicians and apothecaries of the age of Molière has been gratuitously lent to the astrologers, who never wore it. People like to see them dressed —why we cannot tell—in some such comic opera sorcerer's costume as that designed by Gillot in the eighteenth century (Fig. 188). Gillot was the strange engraver who has already delighted us with an imaginary Sabbath utterly outside all reasonable and traditional notions (Fig. 67).

The astrologer of former times is persistently portrayed on the lines of this stereotyped convention, which ought to have been worn out long ago. In actual fact, the men who exercised this profession, in those ages of

wavering uncertainty when no science had as yet dared to proclaim itself 'exact,' were regarded as learned men, the equals of any other learned men, and they wore the costume proper to them as such, and nothing otherwise to single them out for public notice. The calculations to which they applied themselves obliged

Fig. 187. An Astrologer casting a Horoscope
Robert Fludd, *Utriusque cosmi historia* (Oppenheim, 1619).

them to be mathematicians, and there was never a mathematician who was not in some degree addicted to astrology. Astrologers actually wore the simple, grave, and severe costume adopted by most of the learned in the sixteenth century; as one of the best-characterized examples of it I give the fine full-length portrait of Guillaume Postel (Fig. 189). This philosopher emeritus was the first to teach the Hebrew language at the Collège de France, an office with which he was entrusted by Francis I; as a Cabbalist he translated the *Zohar* and *Sepher Ietzirah* into French, and he professed mathematics and occupied himself at the same time with astrology,

although he never wrote anything dealing specially with that subject. The portrait is found in some copies of his book *De Universitate*, and sometimes in his *De Respublica seu magistratibus Atheniensium liber* (Leyden, 1645). Postel's headgear is the doctoral cap worn by Erasmus and all the learned of the sixteenth century; he is gowned in the robe of the philosophers, and although a pectoral cross hangs from his neck, it is in memory of his travels and his sojourns in the East. He holds the mathematician's compass in his hand, and the three globes—terrestrial, celestial, and armillary—near him show his preoccupations quite clearly. It is under this aspect and no other that we have to picture to ourselves the astrologers of times past.

Fig. 188. Imaginary Costume of a Sorcerer

Eighteenth-century print. Drawn by Gillot, engraved by Toullain.

The telescope always put into their hands is no less ridiculous. It must be remembered that the first astronomical telescopes appeared in Holland between 1600 and 1610—earlier than Galileo's, the date of which is 1610 exactly. The reflecting telescope invented by James Gregory dates only from 1663. Throughout the whole sixteenth century, which may be regarded as the culminating period of astrology, astrologers had no telescopes whatever, and employed nothing more than the instruments of the ancients, more or less improved, such as alidads, various quadrants, sextants, semicircles, parallactic instruments, and so on. The great Tycho Brahe himself, who was not only one of the founders of modern astronomy, but also one of the most unswerving partisans of astrology, had no knowledge at all of telescopes, for he died in 1601, and in that year it is doubtful whether they had yet been seen in Holland. The curious portrait showing him in his observatory (Fig. 190) is taken from his great work *Astronomiæ instauratæ mechanica*. According to the inscription at the top of it, this portrait was done in 1587, when he was in his fortieth year; it is one of the most precious of the documents relating to the history of science. Tycho Brahe, in a robe and round cap, sits near a table, waiting

Fig. 189. Guillaume Postel

Guillaume Postel, *De Universitate* (Leyden, 1635).
Author's collection.

Fig. 190. Tycho Brahe in his Observatory in 1587
Tycho Brahe, *Astronomiæ instauratæ mechanica* (Nuremberg, 1602).

for the transit of a star across the meridian. He is pointing to a small rectangular opening in the wall, through which the observation will be made by a person stationed behind him who is watching in a mirror. The only instruments within reach are compasses and a set-square. On the ground floor of the observatory assistants are carrying out distillations which appear to be of an alchemic nature; on the first floor are other assistants working out calculations. On the second floor two astronomers disposed on a balcony are observing the stars with the help of quadrants, sextants, and an armillary sphere. In the foreground we see an astronomical clock and a large apparatus, of Tycho Brahe's own invention, called a quadrant or wall-dial. Nowhere is there the least sign of a telescope, and for very good reason.

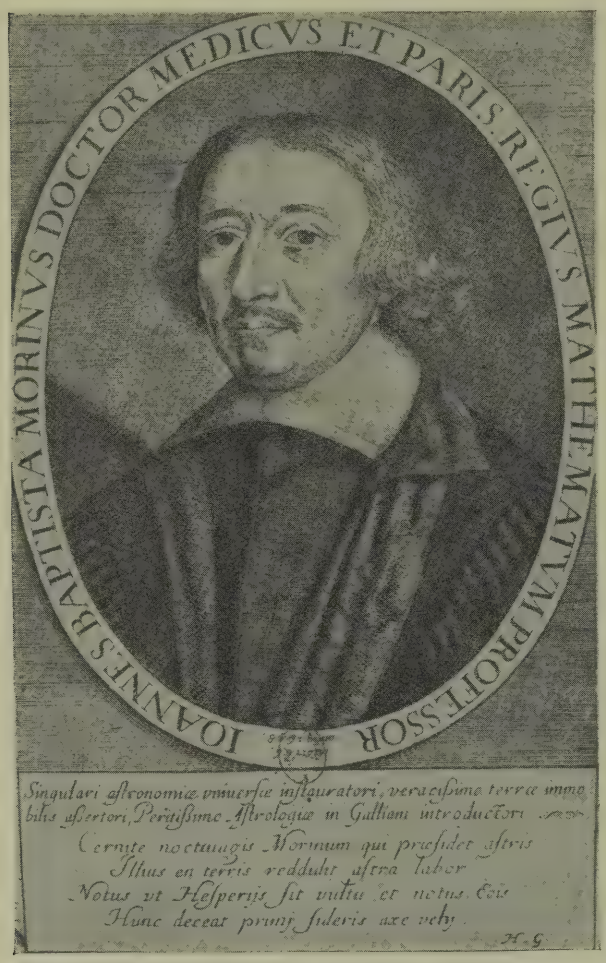


Fig. 191. The Astrologer Jean Baptiste Morin of Villefranche
Print of 1648.

The only eminent astrologer who made use of the novel instrument was Jean Baptiste Morin of Villefranche (born 1583, died 1656) (Fig. 191). I have several times referred to his great work, *Astrologia Gallica*. He was a mathematician of the first order, carried great weight in astronomy, and was the first to conceive the idea of fitting telescopes to alidads and circles by means of the sight-vane. But it must be remembered that astrology was upon the wane by then, and that the period of its great glory was ended before the invention of astronomical telescopes.

A further consideration is that astrologers, always careful of tradition and little inclined to adopt novelties, probably did not show themselves very eager to make use of telescopes, which, in actual fact, brought about hardly any change in the methods of casting horoscopes. Manuscript No. 2541 in the Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, dated 1682 and entitled *Traité astrologique des jugemens des thèmes génétliaques pour tous les accidents de l'homme après sa naissance*, has a pen-drawn frontispiece here reproduced (Fig. 192). This shows an astrologer observing the stars in the ancient

way—that is, by applying his eye not to a telescope, but to a plain wooden ruler. It is not until the beginning of the eighteenth century that we find telescopes put into the hands of astrologers by the Abbé Bordelon (Fig. 193), in a frontispiece from his *Histoire des imaginations extravagantes de Monsieur Oufle* ; but this work is a col-

Fig. 192. An Astrologer observing the Sky

Traité astrologique des jugemens des thèmes génétliaques pour tous les accidents de l'homme après sa naissance. Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, manuscript No. 2541 (seventeenth century).

Fig. 193. Astrologers watching the Heavens

Abbé Bordelon, *Histoire des imaginations extravagantes de Monsieur Oufle* (Amsterdam, 1710).

lection of dull and pointless jibes at astrology and marks precisely the decadence of the art which had known such high state in antiquity. There were no more astrologers, so to speak, or at least those who did continue to exist saw their profession falling into discredit day by day.

Astrology had a considerable vogue in past centuries, and has come to life again in our own day with an intensity which would have seemed unlikely fifty years ago. It must be admitted that its former reputation was to some extent justified by its

predictions of many historical events. The astrologer Louis Gauric announced to Pope Leo X that he would succeed to the Pontificate, and to Giovanni Bentivoglio that he would cease to rule Bologna; both events came about. Richard Cervin announced to his son, Marcel Cervin, that he would become Pope, and Pope he was elected in 1555 under the name of Marcellus II; Palestrina dedicated his famous *Missa Papæ Marcelli* to him. Jean Baptiste Morin predicted the punishment of Cinq-Mars when the latter was still in full favour with Louis XIII. It is said that in 1790 an obscure astrologer, Pierre Le Clerc, informed Napoleon Bonaparte that he would mount a throne.

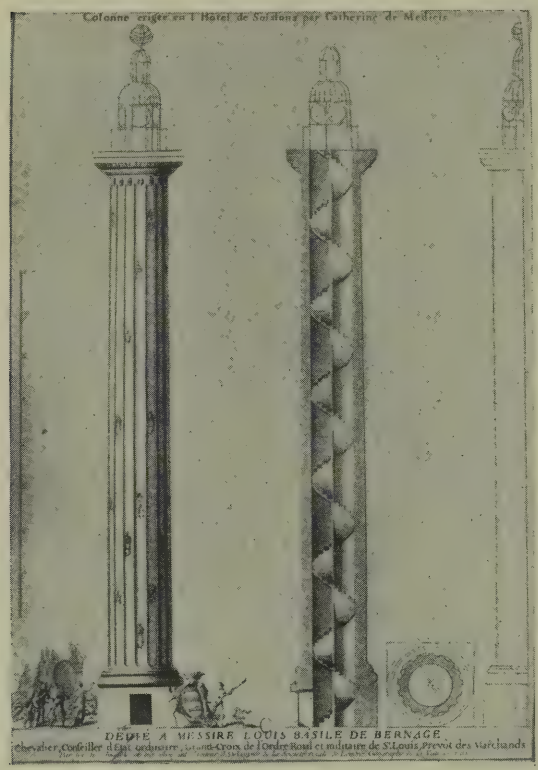


Fig. 194. Astrological Column erected at the Hôtel de Soissons by Catherine de Médicis for Regnier in 1572
Print engraved by Delagrive (1750).

It would be impossible to reckon all the instances of this kind, but they were most numerous in the sixteenth century, which was the splendid age of astrology.

We have already seen that Catherine de Médicis was greatly preoccupied with the occult sciences. She had several astrologers attached to her person; among others Nostradamus, who predicted the death of Henri II, the mysterious Ruggieri—a strange and dubious character who dabbled in sorcery, perhaps practised the less exalted art of poisoning, was a necromancer, and certainly had skill in astrology—and, lastly, Regnier, for whom she built the famous astrological column (Fig. 194). It is still to be seen in Paris, joined to the structure of the Bourse du Commerce, formerly the Halle au Blé, in the Rue de Viarmes. It is the only purely astrological building existing in Europe. It was built to the design of Pierre Bullant in 1572. It is about a hundred feet high, and is in the form of a cylindrical, fluted Ionic column about ten feet in diameter. An internal spiral staircase leads to the summit, which is crowned with a cupola once used for observing the stars. At about two-thirds of the height there is a sundial which does not date from Catherine de Médicis' time; it was added under Louis XV by the astronomer Pingré. The beautiful eighteenth-century engraving reproduced shows the column in elevation, section, plan, and outline half-elevation. Catherine de Médicis had this monument enclosed

by the splendid Hôtel de Soissons (Fig. 195), which she had built for herself in 1572 by Jean Bullant, the King's architect. Her intention was to live at a distance from the Tuileries and the banks of the Seine, which she believed would be fatal to her. In the engraving from the burin of Israel Silvestre Regnier's column is seen rising above the right wing of the buildings, and one can scarcely believe that this enchanting abode existed on the site of the hideous Quartier des Halles, where countless daily transactions leave the mud littered at noon with refuse and rubbish.

Fig. 195. The Hôtel de Soissons, built by Jean Bullant for Catherine de Médicis, showing Regnier's Astrological Column

Print by Israel Silvestre (seventeenth century).

One of the most approved forms of astrology was that which gave rise to prophecies concerning the fate of kingdoms or great events of which nations would be the witnesses. That mysterious personage Myrddhin, who became Merlin the Enchanter in the legend which exercised so considerable an influence on medieval France, was a poet, a sorcerer, a magician, and undoubtedly an astrologer. He wrote a book of obscure prophecies which monarchs never opened without feeling the sensation of some lurking uncertainty or some weighty decision to be taken. But his verses grew more and more obscure the more memory of him was shrouded in the darkness of time, and in the sixteenth century their place was taken by others, more suited to the life of the period, by Cæsar Nostradamus. The strange and rare portrait we give of this famous astrologer (Fig. 196) was engraved in 1562. It is readily conceivable that a man with such potent eyes might exert a disturbing

Fig. 196. Portrait of Nostradamus at the Age of Fifty-nine
Sixteenth-century print.

influence on his contemporaries. He lived in seclusion at Salon, in Provence, devoted himself to astrology after some method of his own, the secret of which he never revealed, and wrote his various *Centuries*. Each of these consisted of a collection of a hundred prophetic quatrains in obscure language ; I have quoted several of them in my *Anthologie de l'occultisme*. I shall just recall two lines from a six-line stanza written by him and published more than fifty years before the event it foretold ; they certainly have the merits of clearness and exactitude.

> Les armes en main jusques six cents et dix
> Gueres plus loin ne s'estendant sa vie.[1]

When the time came there was no hesitation in applying these words to the assassination of Henri IV, which happened in 1610. Nostradamus, who died in 1566, never knew of the fulfilment of his prophecy.

[1] " Weapons in hand until six hundred and ten, hardly longer shall his life endure."

III

ASTROLOGY AND THE MICROCOSM

AMONG the characteristics of all philosophies concerned with the study of the occult laws which govern the universe, and expressing these laws by means of an esoteric symbolism, is the doctrine which treats man as a little world, similar to the great world or universe; this characteristic is common to the works inspired by the Cabbala and to the books of most Greek writers. The theory of the Macrocosm and Microcosm is found repeatedly in the secret mystic teaching of all peoples. A very ancient hermetic text, *La Table d'Emeraude*, says, "The thing that is on high is like the thing that is below," and the works of all the philosophers imbued with occult doctrines are no more than a long commentary on this principle. If man is a diminutive of the universe, if they both obey the same mechanical, physical, and physiological laws, it is easy to know one by the other in one and the same process of study. Whoever knows man knows the universe, and, conversely, whoever knows the universe knows man.

One can guess how seductive such a doctrine of analogy, symmetry, and parallelism was for minds inclined to synthesis. Lacking an analytical method, it was believed that all astrological notions had their exact counterparts in man, and the opportunity of installing the whole planetary system in the human body was too tempting to be lost.

All astrology was dominated by two powerful series of signs—the signs of the seven planets and the twelve signs of the Zodiac. This was the very alphabet of the great Book of Nature, in which the earliest men had learned to read; and when, in the sultry Oriental nights, with the smoke of the camp-fires rising straight to the zenith unstirred by any breeze, the Chaldean shepherds let their eyes wander over the luminous signs of that immensity which must have filled them with dread, and tried to fix on some guiding points in all that movement and great silence, they were erecting, without suspecting it, the first landmarks of mathematics.

For a long time these were the only known elements; the planets and the Zodiac were a delimitation of space in the infinite. They marked the frontier of the known, and it was by the help of these very sure guides that there would next be dared the exploration of man—that other mystery perhaps still more complex and enigmatic than the Great Mystery.

It was first of all incontestably established that the zodiacal girdle wound itself round the human body, marking the chief organs with its twelve signs, and this sort of scientific mysticism inspired veritable works of art which were remarkable for their execution.

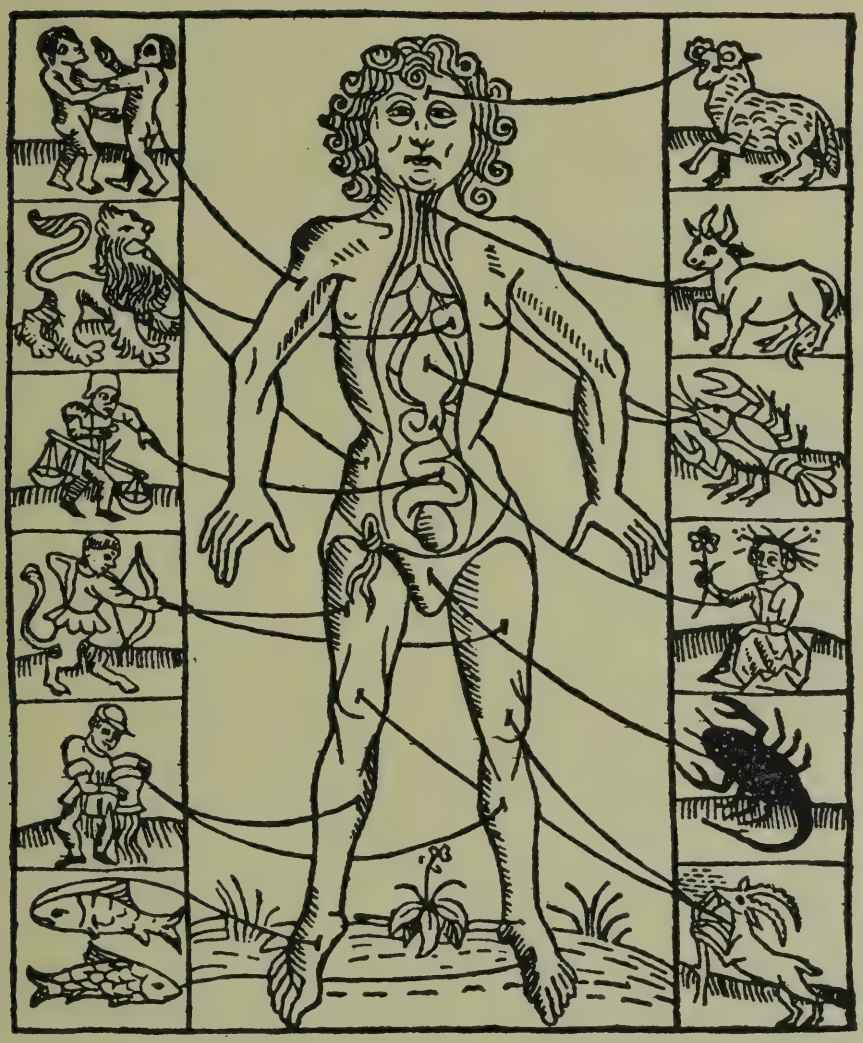


Fig. 197. Position of the Signs of the Zodiac in the Human Body

Martyrologium der Heiligen nach dem Kalender (Strasbourg, 1484). Author's collection.

Fig. 198. Position of the Signs of the Zodiac in the Human Body

Cy est le Compost et Kalendrier des Bergers (Paris, 1499).

We have, to begin with, the arrangement of the signs of the Zodiac on the different parts of the human body very clearly indicated in a woodcut (Fig. 197) taken from an extremely rare German incunabulum, the *Martyrologium der Heiligen nach dem Kalender*, printed at Strasbourg by Johann Prüss in 1484. The Ram governs the head ; the Bull the neck and shoulders ; the Twins the arms ; the Lion

the heart; the Crab the chest and the orifice of the stomach; the Virgin the belly and more particularly the lower orifice of the stomach; the Scales the intestinal operations; the Scorpion the sexual organs; the Archer the thighs; the Goat the knees; the Water-carrier the lower legs; and the Fish the two feet. An intimate connexion ought, therefore, to have existed between the astral scheme of every individual and what we may call his 'anatomical scheme,' but this correlation was rarely confirmed. Another incunabulum, well known to bibliophiles, the quarto *Cy est le Compost et Kalendrier des Bergers*, gives the same figure (Fig. 198), treated with more ingenuity and fancy; this attractive composition shows the same signs, disposed in the same unvarying order, as those shown in Fig. 197.

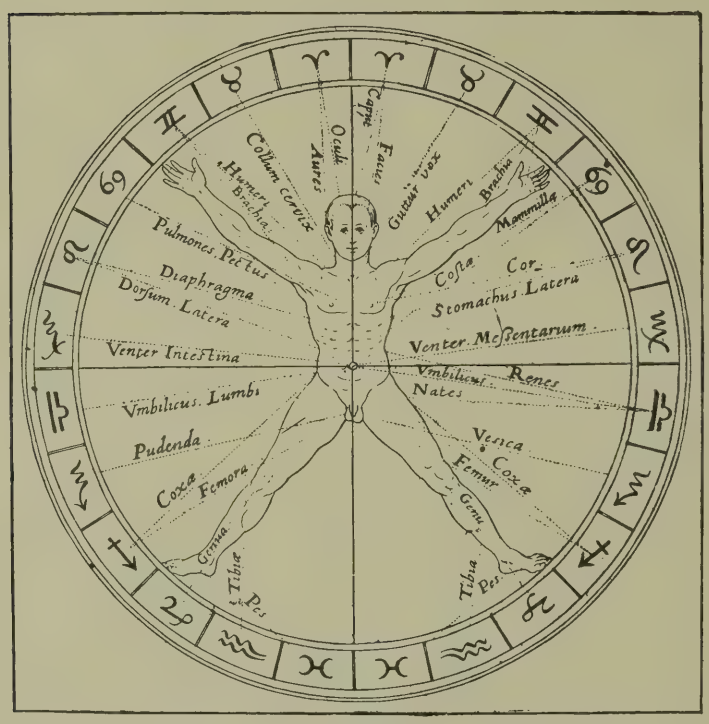


Fig. 199. Position of the Signs of the Zodiac in the Human Body

Robert Fludd, *Utriusque cosmi historia.*

Robert Fludd goes into more precise detail in his *Utriusque cosmi historia*, and has to employ a double zodiac, as seen in Fig. 199, in consequence. This shows the Ram linked with the head, face, ears, and eyes; the Bull with the neck, gullet, throat, and voice; the Twins with the shoulders and arms; the Crab with the chest, lungs, ribs, and breasts; and the Lion with the heart, stomach, sides, diaphragm, and back. This last arrangement exhibits an important variation from the preceding system, which places the stomach under the Crab. The Virgin, again, rules belly, mesentery, and intestines; the Scales the navel, loins, kidneys, and buttocks; the Scorpion the sexual organs and bladder; the Archer thighs and thigh-bones; the Goat the knees; the Water-carrier the lower legs; and the Fish the feet.

The planets also exercised their influence on man's body; their localization in its different parts is again minutely fixed by Robert Fludd (Fig. 200). Saturn dominates the right ear, the teeth, the spleen, and the bladder; Jupiter the liver, the lungs, the ribs, the pulse, and the semen; Mars the left ear, the kidneys, the sexual organs, and the gall-bladder. The Sun governs both brain and heart, and hence

is master of the two most essential parts of the organism ; his influence also extends to the right eye. Venus controls loins, womb, testicles, throat, liver, and breasts ; Mercury the tongue and right hand. The latter also, like the Sun, influences the brain, in which he specially touches the memory, while the Moon too influences the brain, as well as the left eye and the digestive ventricle ; she also controls gout.

In his *Theosophia Practica* (1736) the German mystic Gichtel imagines an entirely different planetary localization. He fixes Saturn in the brain, Jupiter on the forehead, Mars in the lungs, the Sun in the heart, Venus in the stomach, Mercury in the liver, and the Moon in the intestines. More than this, he establishes an analogy, not found elsewhere, between four of the principal organs and the four elements. Fire inhabits the heart, Water the liver, Earth the lungs, and Air the bladder.

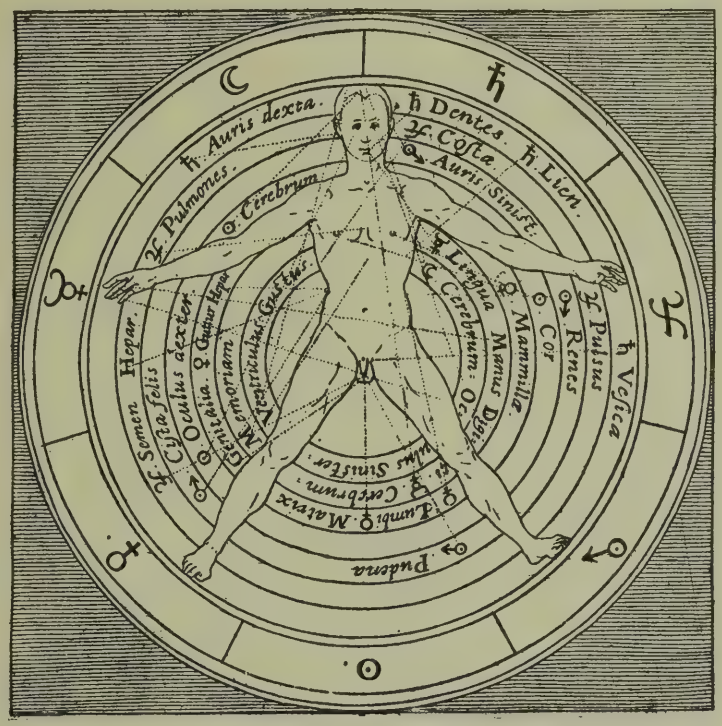


Fig. 200. Localization of the Planets in the Human Body
Robert Fludd, *Utriusque cosmi historia.*

Belot does not agree with him, and gives the following relations : " The Sun, the head ; the Moon, the right arm ; Venus, the left arm ; Jupiter, the stomach ; Mars, the testicles ; Mercury, the right foot ; Saturn, the left foot." But we find yet another divergence in Cornelius Agrippa's *Philosophie occulte*, Book II, chapter xxvii, where we are shown a circle the construction of which he explains thus :

> If from a centre a circle be described touching the top of the head, with the arms lowered until the tips of the fingers touch the circumference of this circle ; and if the feet are stretched apart within this same circumference to as great a distance as that between the extremities of the hands and the top of the head ; then this circle described with the lowest part of the *pecien* [pubis] as centre will be divided into five equal parts which make a perfect pentagon, and the ends of the heels in relation to the navel will make an equilateral triangle.

At the five extremities of this pentagon Agrippa—without giving us any kind of key to his system—places Mars on the top of the head, Venus at the end of the right

hand, Jupiter at the end of the left, Mercury below the right foot, Saturn below the left, the Moon on the sexual organs, and the Sun in the middle of the stomach.

Further on another figure would lead us to understand that the localization of the planets varied according to the attitude assumed by the human body, for Agrippa continues " that if, having the hands thus raised, the feet and legs be so held out that the man is shorter by a fourth part of his height, and his feet and the bottom of the *pecien* make together an equilateral triangle, then a circle described with the navel as centre will touch the ends of the hands and feet." In this attitude Agrippa places the Sun on the top of the head, the Moon at the right hand, Venus at the left, Mercury at the right foot, Saturn at the left (these last two planets undergoing no change), Mars at the sexual organs, and Jupiter in the middle of the stomach.

Fig. 201. The Macrocosm and the Microcosm
Robert Fludd, *Utriusque cosmi historia.*

These discordances between the various authors are regrettable, and can hardly be explained, but it seems that the relations between the planets and the different parts of the human body set out by Robert Fludd accord most nearly with the ancient traditions. Certain modern astrologers, moreover, have introduced the planets Uranus and Neptune into the planetary scheme, they having been discovered long after the decadent period of astrology. Other astrologers, nevertheless, vigorously reject this addition to the data of a science which they regard as perfect, immutable in its principles, and fixed from the beginning of the world.

The conjoined influences upon man of the Zodiac and the planets are skilfully

synthetized in two splendid frontispieces from Fludd's work. In the first (Fig. 201) man, representing the Microcosm inscribed within its heavenly circles, is surrounded by the circles of the planets and the elements. The engraver's fancy has depicted Time—personified, for some unknown reason, by a winged faun—forcing the universe to achieve its eternal rotation by pulling on a rope wound completely round it, like a cable on a windlass. In the other (Fig. 202) the Microcosm is surrounded by the invisible celestial world, and here we link up again with the notions of theology and the Cabbala. Instead of the planetary circles of the Macrocosm, we have the circles of the nine hierarchies of angels; these are the Angels, the Archangels, the Virtues, the Powers, the Principalities, the Dominions, the Thrones, the Cherubim, and the Seraphim. All are divided into three primary hierarchies—lowest, middle, and highest—called by the debatable Greek appellations of Voices, Acclamations, and Apparitions. These nine hierarchies influence not only physical man—like the planetary scheme of the Macrocosm—but man's spiritual and invisible part, which is itself divided into three portions—the lower, or Reason; the middle, or Intellect; and the higher, *mens*, or the Soul, which is nearest the Deity.

Fig. 202. The Microcosm and the Celestial World

Robert Fludd, *Utriusque cosmi historia.*

Robert Fludd sets out still other astral relations with the Microcosm (Fig. 203). According to this curious diagram, the seat of the soul is the top of the skull, and receives a direct ray of the Increate Light, or God; the Intellect, seated in the middle part, is illuminated by the spheres of Created Light, and the Reason derives from the sphere of the spirit of the Empyrean, to which

the whole head belongs. The thorax corresponds to the Ethereal Heaven ; this is the sphere of life, and comprises the orbit of the Sun, who influences the heart. Finally, the belly is in relation with the Heaven of the Elements ; whence we have Fire influencing

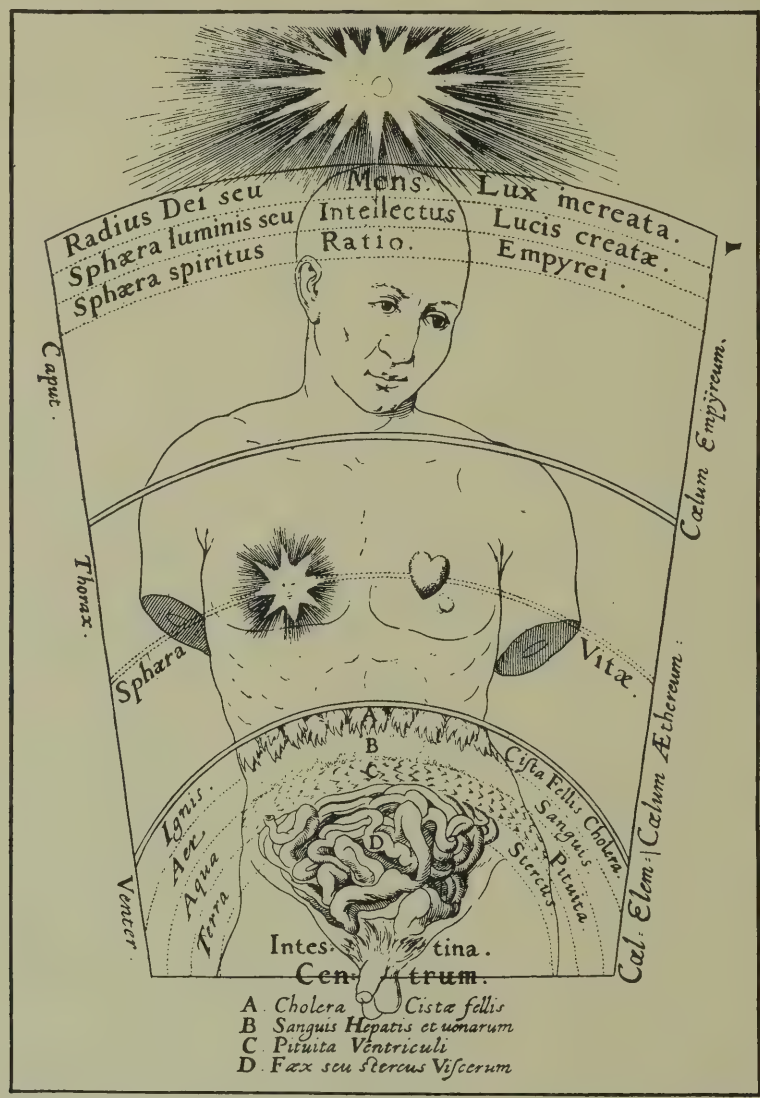
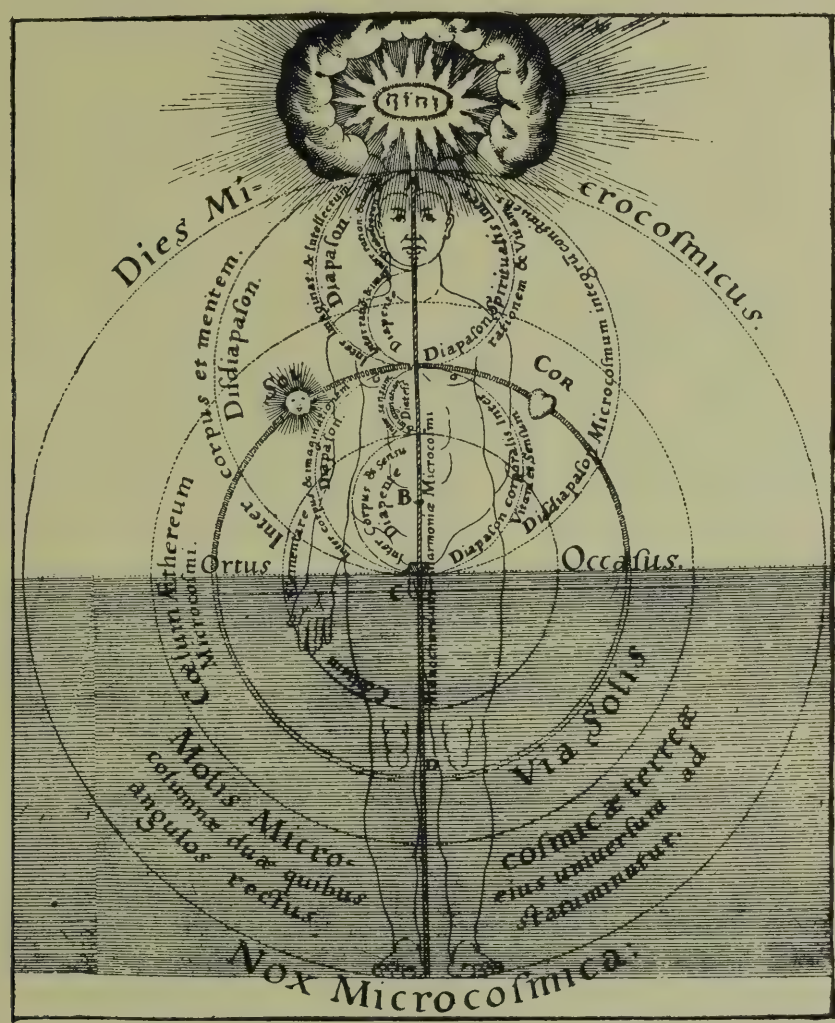


Fig. 203. Relation of the Upper Heavens to Man
Robert Fludd, *Utriusque cosmi historia.*

the bile through the gall-bladder, Air the blood through the liver and veins, Water the phlegm through the stomach, and Earth the excrements through the intestines.

We shall have more difficulty in following Fludd in this next complicated diagram (Fig. 204), in which, pursuing his metaphysical logic, he exhibits his claim that, since the planetary scheme produces the alternation of day and night on earth, there must also be a " Day in Man " and a " Night in Man." In order to support

his claim, he embarks on all kinds of considerations, into which he introduces the relations—borrowed, no doubt, from the *Somnium Scipionis*—which the Pythagoreans alleged they had discovered between the musical intervals and the paths of the stars. The upper part of the body, according to him, corresponds to the day,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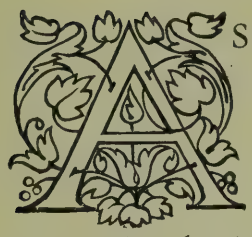
four elements, communicates with the five senses. Then there is a sphere called the "imaginable world," corresponding to the entirely metaphysical sensations of the imagination, which are produced "as in dreams, by non-existent objects and, con-

Fig. 205. The Mystery of the Human Head
Robert Fludd, *Utriusque cosmi historia.*

sequently, by the shadows of elements." Hence we see a system of spheres exactly following the preceding and containing "the shadow of Earth, the shadow of Water, the shadow of gross Air, the shadow of tenuous Air, and, lastly, the shadow of Fire." The intellectual sphere and the imaginative sphere are oddly linked by a slender, sinuous "worm." Last of all, the author places at the back of the skull the sphere which he calls "memorative, or pertaining to remembrance," and he shows it communicating with the spinal marrow.

IV

METOPOSCOPY, OR THE SCIENCE OF THE FRONTAL LINES



S we have seen, astrology rendered it possible to discover the character of the individual and the future in store for him.

It should be possible to obtain the same results through the localization of the planetary scheme in the human body. It is by no means surprising, therefore, to find a number of sciences, comprising both psychological methods and divinatory arts, based upon astrology in its relation to the Microcosm.

The human head possessed a planetary scheme of its own, and would quite naturally attract the attention of observers. Jerome Cardan was the first to remark that the wrinkles of the forehead likewise presented a mass of configurations so well defined that it was impossible for two persons to be like each other in this respect. He at once perceived in this fact a valuable indication of personality, and created a new science, metoposcopy, which became an accession to physiognomy as studied by Jean d'Indagine, Michel Lescot, and Boyvin de Vaurouy.

Metoposcopy, or the science of interpreting frontal wrinkles, seems to have been totally unknown prior to Cardan. At most, some slight suggestion of it might have come from a Greek author, Melampus, who wrote a little treatise of two pages on the interpretation of marks and spots on the body, but it still does not seem that any other author after Melampus, except David l'Agneau, dealt with metoposcopy or made use of the term.

This science ought to have triumphed over cheiromancy, since it is easy to scrutinize the lines on the forehead of any person to whom one is speaking entirely without his knowledge, while the study of the lines of the hand requires the subject to be a wholly consenting party.

It does not seem, however, that metoposcopy was ever put into practice by male or female soothsayers ; it has remained almost unknown, in spite of the fame of its discoverer, and my readers will, I think, be all the more interested on that account in some reproductions of the figures in Cardan's splendid work, *Metoposcopia*. This was published in Latin by Thomas Jolly (Paris, 1658), and a French translation made the same year by C. M. de Laurendière. The Latin text and the translation are almost unprocurable, and are not contained in the complete edition of Cardan's works issued by Charles Spon in 1663.

As was quite to be expected, Cardan established an inevitable relation between astrology and metoposcopy. He discovered a localization of the planets on the forehead similar to that found by astrologers in the case of the bodily members, the head as a separate whole, and the hand. In theory there are seven principal lines on the forehead ; reading upward, they belong to the Moon, Mercury, Venus, the Sun, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn (Fig. 209). These seven lines do not occur on every forehead ; it is scarcely possible even for a single subject to possess them all. As

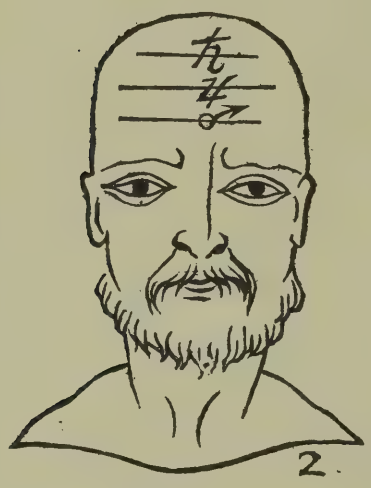


Fig. 206. Forehead marked with the Lines of Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn
Jerome Cardan, *Metoposcopia*.
Author's collection.

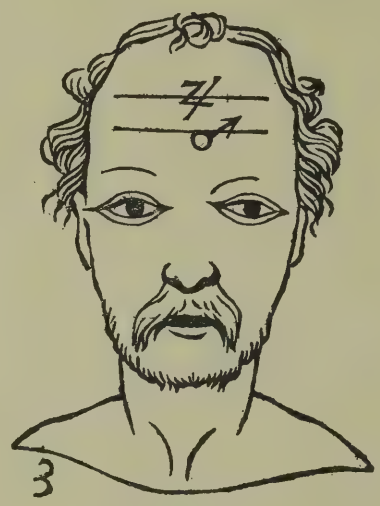


Fig. 207. Forehead marked with the Lines of Mars and Jupiter
Jerome Cardan, *Metoposcopia*.
Author's collection.

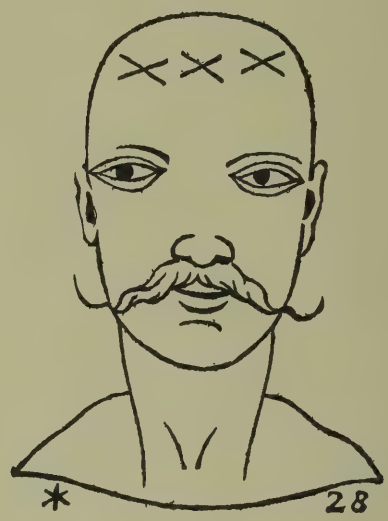


Fig. 208. Forehead marked with Lines indicating an Unprincipled Character
Jerome Cardan, *Metoposcopia*.
Author's collection.

instances, here is a forehead marked with the lines of Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn (Fig. 206), and another with those of Mars and Jupiter alone (Fig. 207).

Long and perfectly straight lines always indicate justice and simplicity of soul, whatever planets they belong to ; but various characters are shown by wavy, streaky, or broken lines. In addition, vertical wrinkles may form acute, obtuse, or right angles with the main lines according to their degree of obliquity, and infinitely variable combinations result, some examples of which I show. A man marked in the way shown by Fig. 208 will be, according to Cardan, dissolute, untruthful, and unprincipled ; he will fall very low through lustfulness, and from wealth will come to extreme poverty. On account of the little wrinkle crossing her line of Mars the young wanton in Fig. 210 will be in peril of a violent and ignominious death through poison, steel, fire, or the plots of women.

When the line of Venus is " like a wave of the sea " (Fig. 211) one may judge

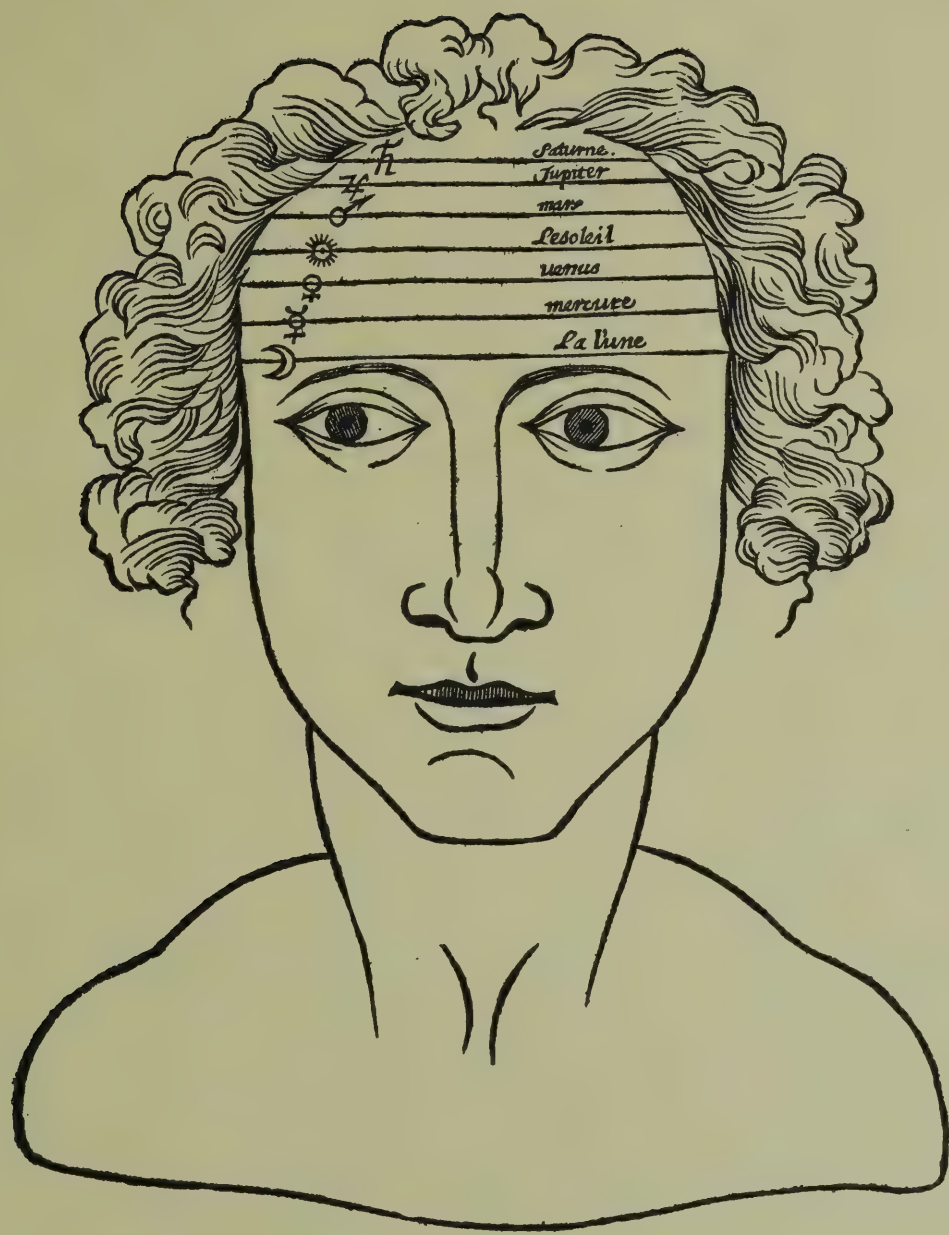


Fig. 209. Position of the Planets on the Wrinkles of the Forehead

Jerome Cardan, *Metoposcopia* (Paris, 1658).

Author's collection.

Fig. 210. Forehead marked with Lines indicating a Violent Death
Jerome Cardan, *Metoposcopia*.
Author's collection.

Fig. 211. Forehead marked with the Lines of Sea-travel
Jerome Cardan, *Metoposcopia*.
Author's collection.

Fig. 212. Forehead marked with the Lines of Land-travel
Jerome Cardan, *Metoposcopia*.
Author's collection.

Fig. 213. Forehead marked with the Lines of Legal Trickery
Jerome Cardan, *Metoposcopia*.
Author's collection.

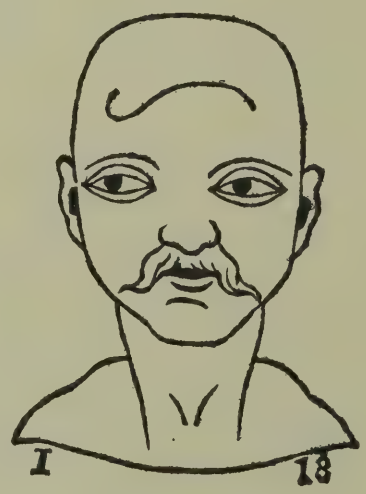


Fig. 214. Forehead marked with the Lines of Instability
Jerome Cardan, *Metoposcopia*.
Author's collection.

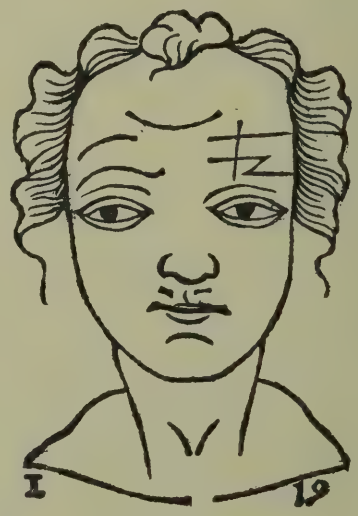


Fig. 215. Forehead marked with the Lines of Usury
Jerome Cardan, *Metoposcopia*.
Author's collection.

Fig. 217. Woman's Forehead marked with the Lines of Generosity
Jerome Cardan, *Metoposcopia*.
Author's collection.

Fig. 218. Woman's Forehead marked with the Lines of Compassion
Jerome Cardan, *Metoposcopia*.
Author's collection.

Fig. 219. Woman's Forehead marked with the Lines of Fierce Virtue
Jerome Cardan, *Metoposcopia*.
Author's collection.

Fig. 220. Woman's Forehead marked with the Lines of Adultery and Mendicity
Jerome Cardan, *Metoposcopia*.
Author's collection.

Fig. 221. Forehead of a Courtesan
Jerome Cardan, *Metoposcopia*.
Author's collection.

Fig. 222. Forehead of a Low-class Courtesan
Jerome Cardan, *Metoposcopia*.
Author's collection.

that the possessor of such a line will travel by sea and meet his death upon it. If the ends of the line bend toward Mercury and the Moon it foretells travel by land (Fig. 212).

The study of the frontal lines according to Cardan's method alters all the indications that might otherwise be obtained from the physiognomy. Thus, the kind of commercial traveller or briskly smiling Gaudissart seen in Fig. 213 is, thanks to the odd lines on his forehead, a person who will bring lawsuits against his family and subject it to stubborn persecution; the Monte Carlo *croupier* in Fig. 214 will be wavering in every action of his life; the inoffensive young man in Fig. 215 will be the worst of usurers, and will die an infamous death; and, finally, the sort of disillusioned Christ of Fig. 216, who would normally inspire complete confidence, will be the most dissolute simpleton who ever trod the earth—and all because of the three curved furrows on his forehead.

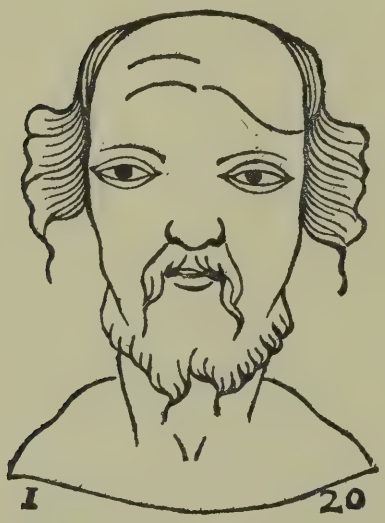


Fig. 216. Forehead marked with the Lines of Debauchery
Jerome Cardan, *Metoposcopia*.
Author's collection.

Inscrutable as it so often is, how very easily the character of women can be read by Cardan's science! The three lines in Fig. 217 indicate a woman who is generous and full of forbearance, and the young person with the sinuous line shown in Fig. 218 will be compassionate and bountiful. A fierce virtue and a mortal hatred of any lewd action will be the attributes of the young lady in Fig. 219, but if we encounter an agreeable person whose forehead is marked with six parallel horizontal lines and a short vertical line, as in Fig. 220, we may be sure that she is an adulteress and will end as a beggar. As for the two creatures in Figs. 221 and 222, they are wantons and courtesans of the smallest repute; the last, especially, belongs to the lowest rank of traffickers of this sort.

Cardan completed his classification of the frontal lines by reckoning the various combinations which they may form with facial spots, marks, or *nævi*. In Fig. 223 we have diagrammatic heads with the positions of such markings correspondingly displayed on the opposite sides of the face.

We see that *nævi* are not connected with the planets, as wrinkles are, but with the twelve signs of the Zodiac, which is what a complete astrological system would require. The Ram, the Bull, and the Twins may be remarked on the upper part of the forehead, with the Crab, the Lion, and the Virgin lower down. The Scales are at the top of the nose, the Scorpion near the ear, and, reading down the cheek, we have the Archer, the Goat, the Water-carrier, and the Fishes. Lastly, a special

nævus on the neck, related to Saturn and marked with his sign, has a particular meaning depending on whether it occurs on the right or left side ; this adds to the extreme complexity of the whole system.

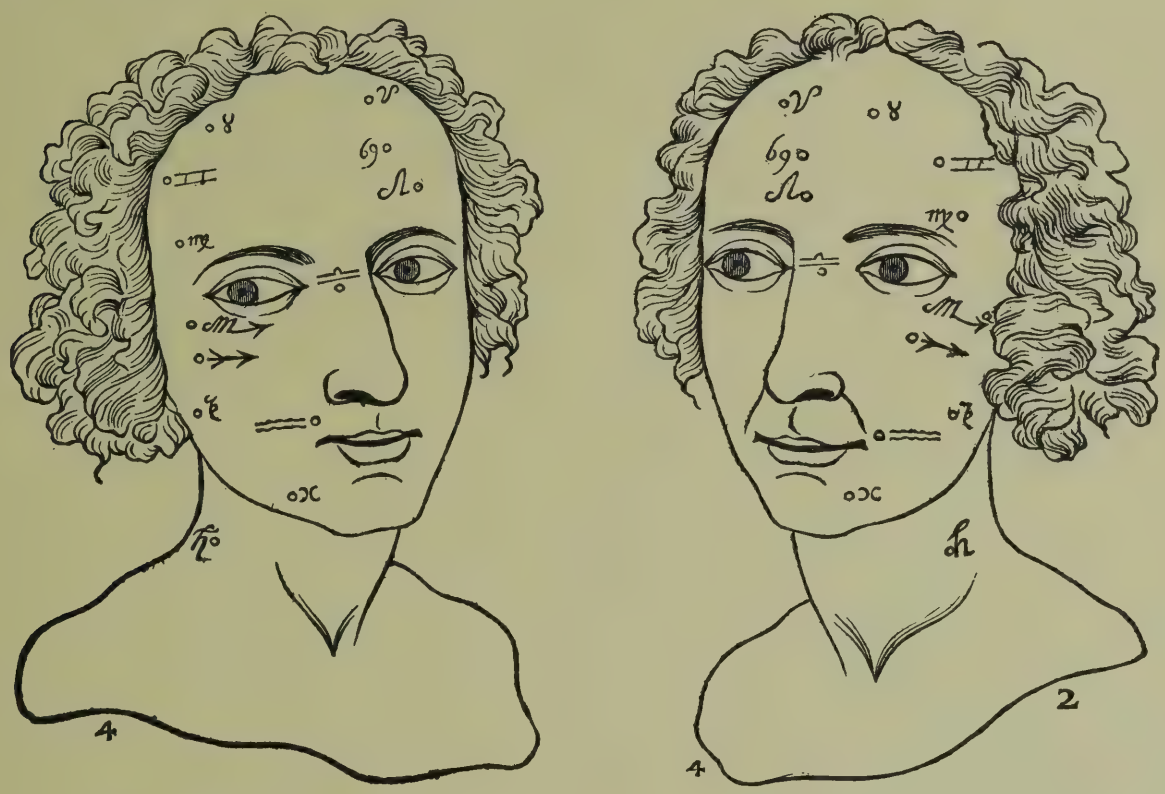


Fig. 223. Zodiacal Localization of Nævi on the Face
Jerome Cardan, *Metoposcopia*.
Author's collection.

Cardan's work includes about eight hundred figures. If we admit that they all result from observations of nature, and are not the product of his theories aided by his brilliant imagination, we have to own ourselves in presence of an impressive monument of patience and sagacity, the precision of which it would be desirable to verify. I do not know of any astrologer or cheiromancer now practising metoposcopy, but he would find repute and profit in it.

V

PHYSIOGNOMY

THE study of the human face gave birth to metoposcopy, a science precise enough in its details as settled by Jerome Cardan, and alongside it another art originated in the same study, less certain in its principles, but more artistic in its ideas. It admitted no planetary interference except by way of decoration, and allowed more freedom to the interpretative intuition of those who practised it. This art was physiognomy, or *physiognomonie*, which claimed to be able to penetrate the secrets of the individual's character by examining his face.

In spite of the maxim " Never judge men by their appearance," every one of us is more or less a physiognomist, and it is very difficult for us to shake off the bad impression which may be made by a face of a sinister or criminal cast. Rightly or wrongly, we have got into the way of looking on the face as the mirror of the soul, and it was so considered by writers upon physiognomy, such as Barthélemy Coclès, in his *Physiognomonia* (Strasbourg, 1533); Jean d'Indagine, in his *Chiromance* (Lyons, 1549); Vulson de la Colombière, in his *Palais des curieux de l'amour et de la fortune* (Paris, 1698); Maître Michel Lescot, in his *Physionomie* (Paris, 1540); the Curé Belot, in his *Œuvres diverses*; and others.

Jean d'Indagine's work is ornamented with pretty woodcuts by the engraver Bernard Salomon, known as Petit Bernard; that of Coclès contains engravings of greater vigour and more decisive style, done by an unknown artist who must have drawn much of his inspiration from the statuary of Strasbourg Cathedral. Specimens from both works are given.

The principles of physiognomy are, as I have said, somewhat vague, and we find them very variously enunciated by the authors just mentioned. Countenances were often classified according to seven planetary types; the Solar type had a round, jovial face framed in fair hair; the Venus type was remarkable for perfection of features, an engaging smile, and fair hair; the Martian had rugged, square-cut, brutal features; the Mercurial was beautiful, with dull colouring and black hair; the Lunar was pale, cold, and melancholy; the Jovian was beautiful and noble, with bold, strongly marked features, and the Saturnine had a yellow bilious complexion, a mournful look, and black hair; its possessor was predisposed to all kinds of accidents and a violent death. But this seems

to be a fairly recent form of classification, and no trace of it is found in the old writers.

In his *Physiognomonia* Barthélemy Coclès begins with a few general types.

Fig. 224. Man and Woman of Excellent Disposition
Barthélemy Coclès, *Physiognomonia* (Strasbourg, 1533).

Fig. 225. Man and Woman of Fiery Disposition
Barthélemy Coclès, *Physiognomonia*.

Fig. 224, for instance, represents a man and a woman endowed with very good dispositions, and Fig. 225 a man and woman of heated disposition, who would develop quickly but be inclined to anger, and would not savour the joys of life like the former two. The bitter fold at the corner of the mouth shows that they are not easy of access and cannot be amiable and pleasant in their human relationships.

Last of these general types is a man of sickly constitution (Fig. 226), who digests badly, cannot take his meals at proper hours, is perpetually sad, sleeps little, feels dull, and does not perfectly realize any of the functions necessary for the maintenance of good health.

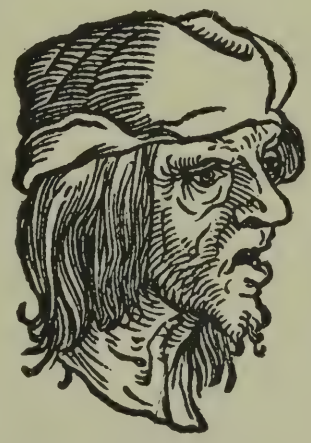


Fig. 226. Man of Sickly Constitution
Barthélemy Coclès, *Physiognomonia*.

The forehead offers very valuable indications to physiognomists. David l'Agneau found a great deal in the forehead, as his *Traité de Métoposcopie et Physiognomonie* tells us :

> Those with a high forehead are lazy and ignorant, and if it is fleshy and sleek they are wrathful, and if with this they have prick ears they are still more wrathful, according to Aristotle. Those who have little foreheads are bustling and foolish, as are they likewise who have them great and narrow. Those with long foreheads are docile and gentle and of good sense ; those who have them as it were square and pleasant are magnanimous and strong ;

and so on.

According to Coclès, foreheads like those in Fig. 227, with smooth, unwrinkled

skin, indicate vain, salacious men, very ready to take pleasure in trickery ; foreheads which are meagre in every part indicate simple-minded and irascible folk, quickly cruel and grasping (Fig. 228).

Fig. 227. Foreheads of Vain and Salacious Men
Barthélemy Coclès, *Physiognomonia.*

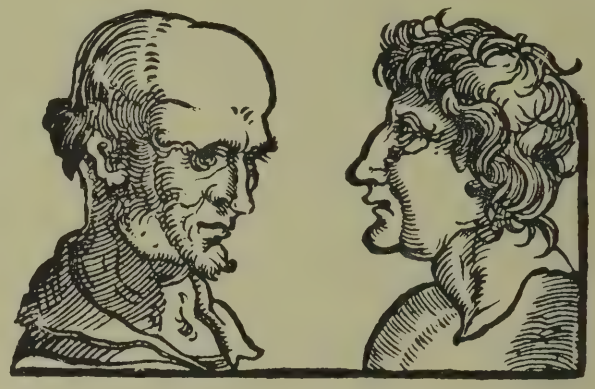


Fig. 228. Foreheads of Irascible, Cruel, and Covetous Men
Barthélemy Coclès, *Physiognomonia.*

Michel Lescot, in his *Physionomie*, reads the following signs in the mouth :

> Mockery abounds in the mouth of fools and of those with great spleens. He, on the contrary, whose mouth laughs easily is a frank man, vain and inconstant ; fickle in belief, of heavy understanding and well-liking ; willing and not secret. Whose mouth laughs but seldom and briefly is a steadfast man ; ingenious, of clear understanding ; secret, faithful, and laborious.

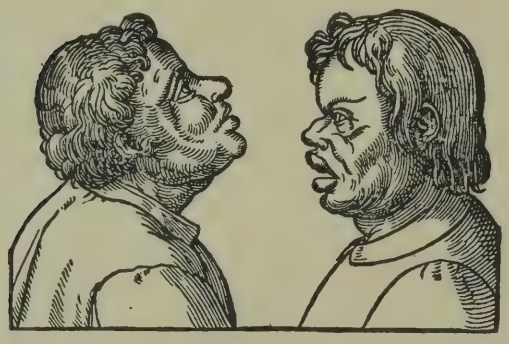


Fig. 229. Mouths of Daring, Reckless, Lewd, and Untruthful Men
Engraved by Le Petit Bernard.
Jean d'Indagine, *Chiromance* (Lyons, 1549).

Fig. 230. Teeth of an Upright Man and a Cruel Man
Engraved by Le Petit Bernard.
Jean d'Indagine, *Chiromance.*

The *Chiromance* of Jean d'Indagine shows us two types of mouth (Fig. 229) belonging to daring, reckless, lewd, and untruthful men. He finds in the teeth too indications of character which other physiognomists will have trouble in discovering there. One of the men in Fig. 230 has a beautiful set of teeth, which denotes

Fig. 231. Eyes of Lazy, Reckless, and Voracious Men
Barthélemy Coclès, *Physiognomonia.*

Fig. 232. Eyes of Men who are Pacific, Loyal, Good-tempered, and of Great Intellect
Barthélemy Coclès, *Physiognomonia.*

Fig. 233. Eyes of Unstable, Luxurious, Treacherous, and Untruthful Men
Barthélemy Coclès, *Physiognomonia.*

Fig. 234. Eyes of a Crafty Man and a Simple Man
Barthélemy Coclès, *Physiognomonia.*

Fig. 235. Eyelashes of Men who are Proud, Vainglorious, and Audacious
Barthélemy Coclès, *Physiognomonia.*

Fig. 236. Noses of Vain, Untruthful, Luxurious, and Fickle Persons
Barthélemy Coclès, *Physiognomonia.*

uprightness of mind and courteous manners; the other has protruding teeth, an indication, we cannot doubt, of base and sanguinary appetites and an inclination to imbecile cruelty.

Fig. 237. Noses of a Weak and Curious Person and of a Vainglorious Person
Barthélemy Coclès, *Physiognomonia.*

Like all other physiognomists, Barthélemy Coclès attaches great importance to the eyes, and exhibits very numerous specimens of them. Fig. 231 shows the eyes of lazy, reckless, and envious men; Fig. 232 those of loyal and peaceful men, good-tempered and of fine intellect. The eyes shown in Fig. 233 belong to fickle and luxurious men, who are often liars, treacherous, and infidels, and of the two men in Fig. 234 the one on the left has eyes denoting cunning, malice, and impiety, while the right-hand one, on the contrary, seems, according to his eyes, to be simple, credulous, and slow-witted.

Even the eyelashes are strictly significant. Barthélemy Coclès shows two men whom one could not hesitate to stigmatize as proud, vainglorious, and insolent (Fig. 235), judging by the long, curling lashes with which their eyes are furnished.

Fig. 238. Hair of a Very Proud Person and of a Timid and Feeble Person
Barthélemy Coclès, *Physiognomonia.*

The worthy priest Belot places the nose under the influence of the Moon, because, says he, "through this flow the discharges from the ventricles of the brain, and the Moon, being nearest of any to the earth, thence brings us a thousand exhalations and causes them to evaporate."

A snub nose like those in Fig. 236, or the one belonging to the person on the right in Fig. 237, denotes, according to Coclès, persons who are vain, untruthful, luxurious, and unstable, and are also seducers and infidels; in short, they seem to have every defect. The nose of the left-hand person in the same figure points to a sagacious, obliging, faithful, and upright man.

The last point is the hair, which also shows certain aspects of the character; our authors seem to have forgotten, however, to assign any astrological relation to it. By what Coclès says, the person on the left in Fig. 238, with short, coarse, bristling hair, will be strong, self-confident, bold, proud, deceitful, and simple-minded rather than wise; the person facing him, on the contrary, with straight, sleek hair, fine and soft, is timid, weak—physically speaking—peaceful, and gentle. A man whose hair covers the temples and part of the forehead, as in Fig. 239, is simple, vain, luxurious, credulous, rustic in speech and manners, and thick-witted. As for the beard of the person on the right in the same figure, this denotes brutality, vengefulness, anger, and the spirit of domination.

Fig. 239. Hair of a Rustic and Thick-witted Person and Beard of a Brutal and Overbearing Person

Barthélemy Coclès, *Physiognomonia.*

As we see, physiognomy is before all a science of intuition, the principles of which it is almost impossible to fix. It has separated to some extent from the occult sciences, and become a branch of physio-psychology easily practicable by any person gifted with a sagacious and observing mind.

VI

CHEIROMANCY

IN dealing with cheiromancy we are wholly back in the domain of astrology. If man is a microcosm with respect to the universe the hand is a lesser microcosm within the microcosm ; all its parts are governed by the planets, and the signs of the Zodiac have their affinities there also. It has even been sought to establish a relationship between the hand and the tarot, but this attempt is a modern invention of no traditional value.

Since nothing, according to the hermetists, was left to chance in the Creation, the lines which furrow the hand without serving any physiological purpose must be in constant relation with all the faculties of the individual. They were, like the stars, indications of both the character and the fate allotted to every one of us. The great authority of the Holy Scriptures comes in here again, for we read in the Book of Job (xxxvii, 7) : " Qui in manu omnium hominum signat, ut noverint singuli opera sua." I leave Maistre de Sacy to take full responsibility for the following translation, which is singularly favourable to cheiromancy : " God Who sets, as it were, a seal in the hand of all men that they may discover their works." The old Latin version of the Scriptures which preceded St Jerome's reads : " God has placed signs in the hands of all the sons of men, that all the sons of men may know His work." And then we have the exact statement of Proverbs iii, 16, as if God had wished to go into the very details of cheiromancy : " Longitudo dierum in dextera ejus et in sinistra illius divitiæ et gloria." [1]

Sheltering behind such an authority, the cheiromancers, of course, proceeded to establish a complicated science with an abundant iconographic documentation which will display all its details to us ; from the seventeenth century onward, indeed, they were no longer a secret to anyone. At once a psychological science, since it announced the physical and moral character of the individual, and a divinatory art, since it predicted the future in store for him, it could connect itself with medicine through the first of its functions, and through the second formed an integral part of occultism. Certain cheiromancers assert that the left hand should be used for reading the lines and various signs. Since from the remotest antiquity all the peoples of the world have contracted the habit of being right-handed rather than ambidextrous, the left hand naturally does less work than the other, and its lines are

[1] " Length of days is in her right hand, and in her left hand riches and honour."

consequently preserved with a completeness not found in the right. Others say that the original destiny of man is written in the left hand, and that his destiny as modified by the daily expression of his will is found in the right hand, as a result of the labour to which this is applied. But now begins the strife between the partisans of fatality and of free-will. If man modifies his destiny by his will then he bears in his left hand the signs of a destiny which is not accomplished, and is in consequence not a destiny at all. This is a complicated problem, an insoluble question, which it is best not to raise.

Cheiromancers paid attention to six principal lines in the human hand. These might be longer or shorter, more or less bent, more or less conspicuous, and might be broken or even totally wanting, but in all cases they would form an invariable system as a whole. In his *Chiromance* the celebrated Jean d'Indagine indicates these lines in the clearest and most precise fashion; here is his pretty woodcut with its original explanatory inscription (Fig. 240). The names of these lines suffice to indicate their meaning. The mensal, or line of fortune, corresponds to the destiny of the individual; the line of life, or of the heart, indicates the approximate duration of his life; the middle line corresponds to his profession; and the line of the liver marks the phases of his health.

Fig. 240. The Six Principal Lines of the Hand
Jean d'Indagine, *Chiromance* (Lyons, 1549).

Later on, however, modifications were added to these original notions. The general diagram of the hand presented by Robert Fludd in his work *Utriusque cosmi historia* (so often put under contribution already) displays various differences (Fig. 241). The chief is the appearance of line H, the Saturnian line, which moderns call the line of chance, fortune, or fate. The line of life, or the heart, at A, is in the same position as that shown in Fig. 240. The line of the liver, or hepatic line, has become the line of the brain (D), and it is the natural middle line which has become the hepatic line shown at C. The mensal has not undergone any change. We should note the lines dividing the wrist from the hand, which are variously called the restrainte, rasette, zazette, rasulte, rascette, or bracelets; when they are well

marked these mean a long and happy life. Then there is the percussion, or the edge of the hand which may be used for striking with the fist clenched ; this contains the lines of imagination and generation. The *Physiognomonia* of Barthélemy Coclès, previously quoted, contains a similar figure with the description in German (Fig. 242), but it gives no name to what Fludd calls the line of the brain and Jean d'Indagine the line of the liver. Although Coclès was earlier than Jean d'Indagine, judging by the date of publication of his work, he was clearly familiar with the Saturnian line, which he calls in his archaic language *die lini des glucks*.[1] Modern astrologers have retained the line of life in the same position, calling it also the line of health or of the blood. The ancient natural middle line—the hepatic, according to Fludd—has become the line of the head. The mensal is the line of the heart, an attribution which the ancients gave to the line of life. The line which Jean d'Indagine called the line of the liver, and Fludd the line of the brain, seems to be that now called the line of intuition.

Fig. 241. General Diagram of the Lines of the Hand

Robert Fludd, *Utriusque cosmi historia* (Oppenheim, 1619).

The hand is naturally subject to planetary influences. The planets share it among them in the way very well shown by this engraving borrowed from Jean d'Indagine (Fig. 243). The forefinger belongs to Jupiter, the middle to Saturn, the third to the Sun, and the little finger to Mercury, while the thumb is ruled by Venus. The other two planets occupy the rest of the hand ; Mars takes the central part of the palm, and the Moon that side portion which was called, as we saw, the percussion. This allocation of the planets has been universally adopted since the time of Jean d'Indagine, but it is still worth remarking that Jerome Cardan gave the little finger to Venus and the thumb to Mars, seating Mercury in the middle of the hand ; while Al Kindi deprived Saturn of the

[1] " The line of good luck."

middle finger and gave it to Mars, placed the thumb under the domination of Saturn, and, like Cardan, assigned the little finger to Venus.

The position of the signs of the Zodiac in the hand is no longer discussed, but Jean Baptiste Belot did not neglect to settle it. In the collection of his works entitled *Œuvres de Monsieur Jean Belot, curé de Milmonts, professeur aux sciences divines et célestes*, we come upon this fine plate (Fig. 244), which does not lack naïve and picturesque detail. Here the Ram is placed in the end phalange of the forefinger, the Bull in the middle phalange, and the Twins in the basal phalange. In the middle finger we find, always reading from tip to base, the Goat, the Water-carrier, and the Fishes; in the third finger the Crab, the Lion, and the Virgin; and in the little finger the Scales, the Scorpion, and the Archer.

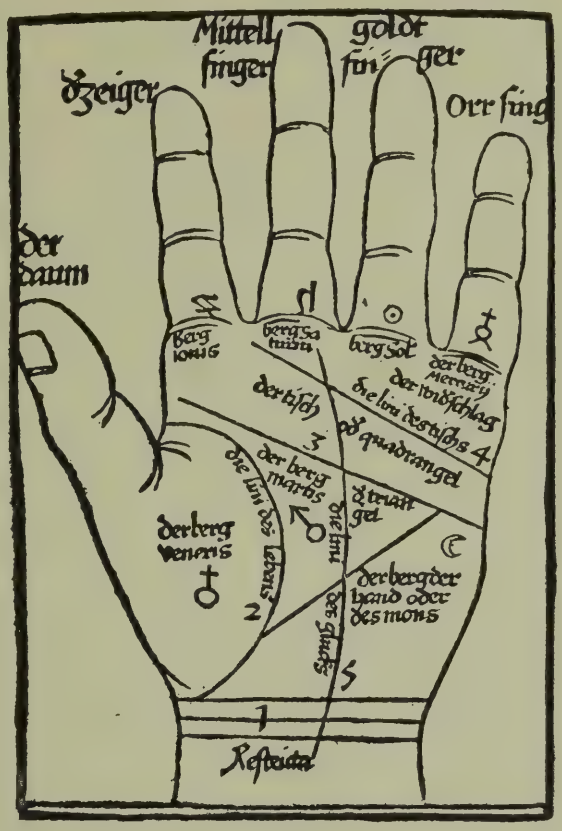


Fig. 242. General Diagram of the Lines of the Hand

Barthélemy Coclès, *Physiognomonia*.

At the base of the fingers are the sort of fleshy prominences which have received the name of 'mounts'; thus the Mounts of Jupiter, Saturn, Mercury, and the Sun are spoken of. The Mount of Venus is the large protuberance which covers the root of the thumb. The insignificant Mount of Mars is almost always lost in the Mount of Mercury, although theoretically it ought to be below the latter, and in the same way the Mount of Luna is almost merged in the percussion. Robert Fludd has marked the positions of these mounts with planetary signs in Fig. 241, and they are also indicated in Fig. 242, which the reader should consult.

In the sequel the planets gave their names to the actual lines of the hand, which were supposed to start from the corresponding mounts. Thus, the line of life was called the Venusian line, because it surrounds the thumb; the line of fortune, which starts from the middle finger, is the Saturnian; the line of the head, which cuts through the Plain of Mars, is the Martian; the line of the heart is the Jovian, since it ends at the forefinger; the line of the arts, or Apollonian, is also the Solar line, as it starts from the third finger; and the line of intuition, which starts from the little finger, is called the Mercurian. We might further remark a little supplementary

semicircular line which runs from the Mount of Jupiter to the Mount of Mercury; it is shown in Fig. 241 under the name of Cingulum Veneris. Belot calls it the Ceinture de Vénus—the Girdle of Venus—in Fig. 244; nowadays it is more commonly known as the Ring of Venus. There is also the Milky Way, the Via Lactea, or Via Lasciva, a little line which divides the Mount of Luna into two parts; it is at the edge of the percussion and is marked K in Fig. 241.

Fig. 243. Position of the Planets in the Hand
Jean d'Indagine, *Chiromance*.

The particular way in which these lines cross one another in a given subject, and their general bearing, direction, and intensity, produce inexhaustible combinations which give rise to interpretations as varied as those of astrological schemes. The exactness of these interpretations depends on the skill, experience, and clairvoyant power of the cheiromancer; it quite often happens that he will perceive too late that a hand contains a whole array of things which he was unable to see at first.

The hand of every person should show the approximate date of his death; this is indicated by a break in the line of life. The tenth year is reckoned to be about the Mount of Jupiter and the eightieth by the bracelets, and the interval is divided into equal parts. On the Saturnian line we see the vicissitudes caused by chance or fortune; the Martian, or line of the head, denotes the character of the person; the Jovian shows his inclinations, and the Solar and Mercurian his predilections in the arts and sciences. Length of life is sometimes calculated from the number of the bracelets; the Milky Way, as well as the Girdle of Venus, relates to love; and the lines on the percussion show the number of children the subject will have.

It will be easily understood that we cannot here consider all the combinations studied by cheiromancers; we shall confine ourselves to a few characteristic examples of horoscopic interpretation taken from the best authors. The works of

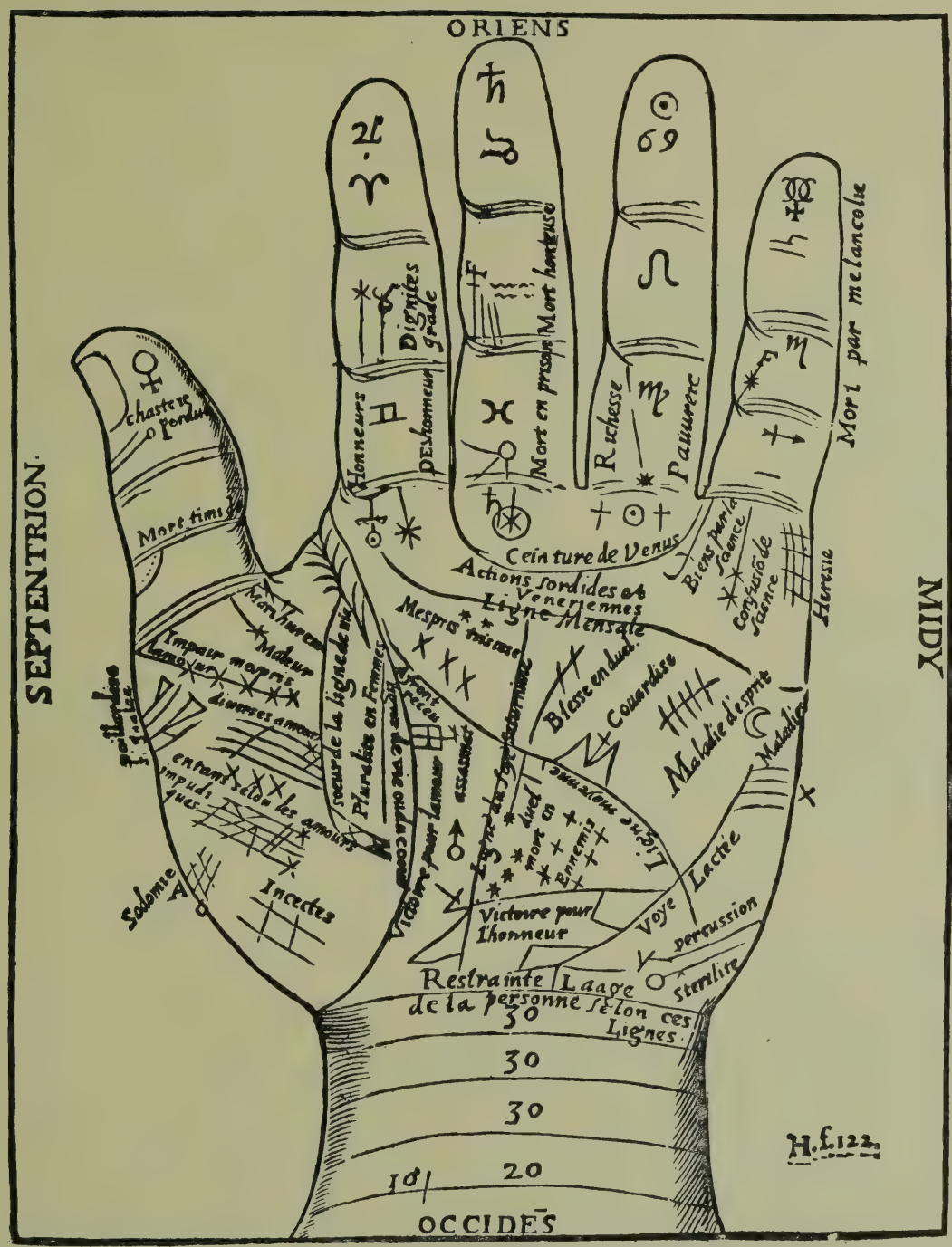


Fig. 244. Position of the Signs of the Zodiac in the Hand
Jean Baptiste Belot, *Œuvres* (1640).

Barthélemy Coclès and Jean d'Indagine, already quoted, are illustrated by charming designs in which numerous types of hand are presented on a background of Renaissance ornament with very decorative effect. The same sort of thing is also found in a small, undated volume published at Lyons, entitled *L'Art de Chyromance d'excellent et très exercité et prouvé Maistre Andry Corvum, translaté de latin en françoys par maistre Jean Verdelley*. This André Corvo might well be no more than a pseudonym used by Coclès ; in every case their designs and descriptions are exactly alike.

Fig. 245. Saturnian Line
André Corvo, *L'Art de Chyromance* (Lyons, about 1545).

Fig. 246. Double Saturnian Line
André Corvo, *L'Art de Chyromance* (Lyons, about 1545).

Here is how Corvo interprets the Saturnian line (Fig. 245) :

> When you see the line of prosperity lying thus, of a good breadth throughout its length and following the lines of the joining of the hand and arm, as it appears in this hand, and all shall show a lively colour, then this means a man prosperous in all his dealings, and if you find the opposite this means a man who discovers new sciences, desires to erect buildings, is avaricious in the goods of this world and well inclined to tilling the soil.

The doubling of the Saturnian line (Fig. 246) is interpreted thus :

> When you see in a hand two lines of such form this means that the man will be unstable, fickle, and a wanderer from place to place. He shall dwell in many places and be poor at the end of his days.

A configuration of the kind shown in Fig. 247, which seems to be a double line of intuition, or Mercury, is not much to be envied if we may believe our author :

> When you see two lines of such form as appears in this hand then this signifies a

loquacious, presumptuous man who shall labour with little gain and shall go from his own country and be greatly subject to servitude.

Much more desirable is this beautiful Solar, or Apollonian, line (Fig. 248), which would predict the most enviable of destinies for us :

When you shall see these lines in a hand, intersecting in such wise as you see them in this hand, then this means that the man shall follow many roads with honour and that he loves travelling about all places, or that many offices of honour and great lordship and great rewards shall be given him if he desires to dwell there where offices be.

Fig. 247. Double Mercurian Line
André Corvo, *L'Art de Chyromance.*

Fig. 248. Double Solar Line
André Corvo, *L'Art de Chyromance.*

We could be equally content with this single Saturnian line stopping at the middle line (Fig. 249), both being straight and well marked :

When you shall find the line of prosperity rising up thus as it appears in this hand, then this means an upright man prospering in fortune day by day, doing his tasks, loving virtue, and of great understanding. But know that the said line must be straight, for if it seem crooked then it means the opposite.

A double Saturnian, or Apollonian, line must not break off against the middle line (Fig. 250), or a very poor sort of destiny is to be expected :

When you find in a hand two such lines which intersect the hand as far as the middle line, as it appears in this hand, then this shows a man who shall gain often and be solicitous of gain, curious, of ill spirit, deceitful in his promises, in many of his actions unfortunate, in his dealings careful and eager.

Lastly, even the manner of carrying the hands may have its special significance,

according to Barthélemy Coclès and André Corvo, when it comes to a gesture which has grown habitual. One need never hope to get money out of a man who shuts his thumb into his fist in the way shown in Fig. 251, for here is the warning given on this point :

> When you see a man keeping his hand shut, meaning the thumb to be hidden within the fingers, then that man is a miser who will get by right or wrong.

In studying the lines of a hand the following points have to be considered : their direction, number, length, breadth, depth, and colour ; their clearness, the presence

Fig. 249. Saturnian Line stopping at the Middle Line
André Corvo, *L'Art de Chyromance.*

Fig. 250. Double Solar Line breaking off at the Middle Line
André Corvo, *L'Art de Chyromance.*

of breaks ; whether they are double or possibly treble ; finally, their complete absence. But there are multitudinous signs which may be found in a hand and are susceptible of interpretation—stars, crosses, triangles, squares, circles, planetary signs, networks, knots, letters, figures, and so forth. Some have even gone so far as to make out letters of the Hebrew alphabet, and various authors have provided interpretations for every one of the twenty-two letters of this alphabet according to whether they are found in one region of the hand or another.

In his *Chiromance* Jean d'Indagine gives numerous examples of these different signs. I have selected two showing the importance which may be assumed by a little cross on the Mount of Saturn (Fig. 252), or a series of little knots on the middle line (Fig. 253). The illustrations include Jean d'Indagine's commentary,

reproduced exactly; it is certainly more eloquent than any explanations I could give. Here is what he says in Fig. 252:

> If the natural middle line drawn above makes in its course as it were a semicircle, clearly marked, then he who has it thus will be in danger from animals with four legs and perhaps will be killed by them. But if at the end of this line there are two other little lines showing on both sides, these denote only certain wounds, which will be made by iron instruments. If a small cross scored with little lines appears to the right of the finger of Saturn it indicates a short life and also debility and bodily weakness, and this will be all the more sure if the line has not the quadrangle.

The commentary on Fig. 253 runs thus:

> If such little knots are found in the natural middle line they show as many murders and homicides committed as there are knots, always provided that these said knots be blanched and pale. If they are reddish they mean that the man will be a homicide and a robber. If any crooked scores are found in the said natural line they denote an unhappy and unfortunate man; and if a cross is there found I infer that the man will be obstinate and litigious and a lover of discord and altercations.

Fig. 251. The Closed Hand
André Corvo, *L'Art de Chyromance.*

Robert Fludd presents a study of a woman's left hand (Fig. 254), in which he describes very numerous marks of considerable importance though insignificant appearance. The cross marked *a* means death, and the larger the cross the sooner death will take place. The cross *b* also banishes life and leads inevitably to death. The cross at *c* is a sign that religious vows will be taken; the little marks at *e* are signs of belief or of a cessation of unbelief, if this exists. The lines at *f* indicate wealth in old age, at *g* in middle age, and at *h* in youth, and the cross at *i* indicates true confession. If the line *l* extends to the middle of the triangle of the hand it is a sign of shipwreck. A cross on the line *mm* shows the dignity of the sceptre. If the line *n* extends well toward the triangle it indicates a well-preserved man or woman. The three little signs at *o* indicate wounds; if the signs are large the wounds are still to come, but they have already been suffered if the signs are small. If the little line at *p* lies at an angle to another it denotes sickness during the current year. The line appearing at *q* is a sign of death in childbirth, and if this sign is on the middle finger, and another one like it is found on the forefinger, one may be certain of sudden death. From *r* we get the assurance that the woman is free from all faults. If several lines are found at *s* the

woman will have more sons than daughters ; *t* is the sign of sons ; *u* the sign of daughters. The woman will marry as many husbands as there are lines at *x*, not counting the first line ; if the following lines are more strongly marked than the first the husbands will be nobler than the wife, and the reverse marking has the

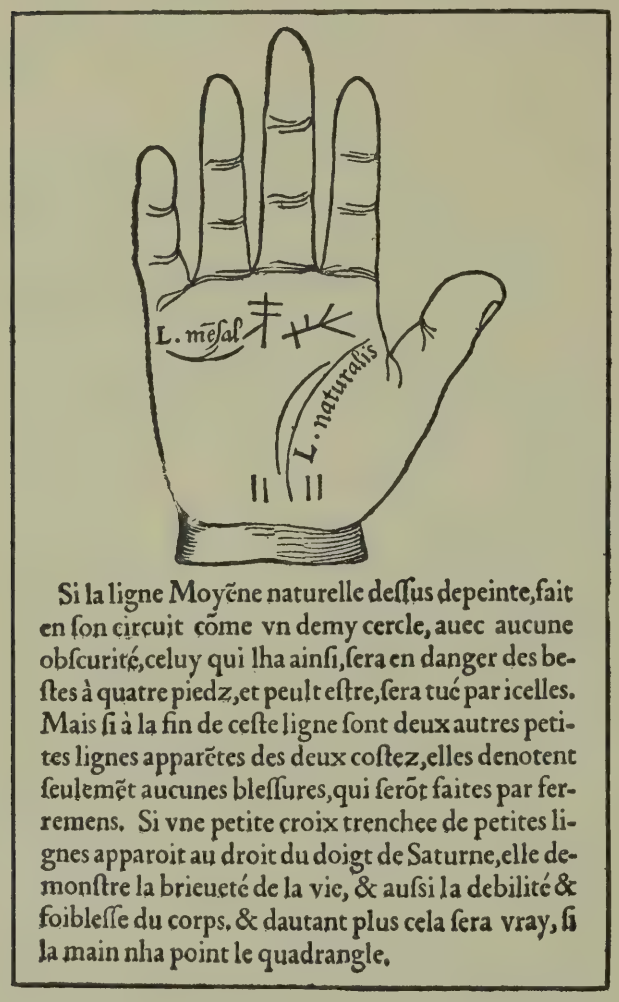


Fig. 252. Signs affecting the Finger of Saturn
Jean d'Indagine, *Chiromance*.

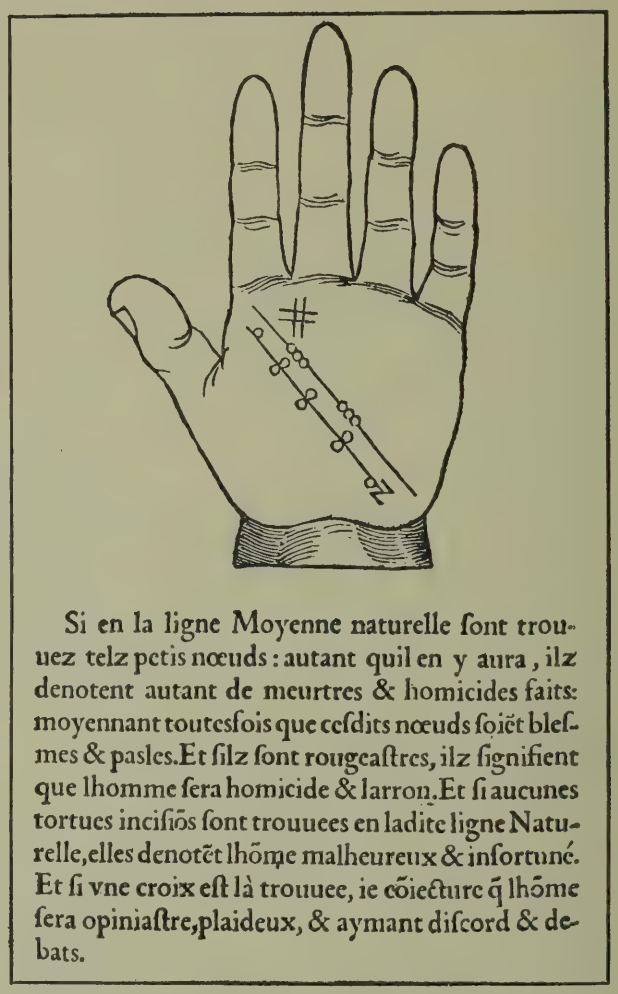


Fig. 253. Inauspicious Signs affecting the Middle Line
Jean d'Indagine, *Chiromance*.

reverse meaning. The lines seen at *y* denote courtesans, and line *z* signifies an inviolate woman. *A* is the sign of clemency.

The large and beautiful hand reproduced earlier from Belot's work (Fig. 244) also contains a quantity of most curious fatal marks. It shows the signs of heresy, of death from melancholy, of death in prison, and of a shameful death ; of honours, dignities, dishonour, wealth, poverty, death in a duel, and victory in the same sort of combat ; of mental sickness, sterility, lewdness, assassination, and so forth.

After enjoying considerable favour in past centuries cheiromancy has remained the most popular, perhaps, of the divinatory sciences. It has made its way into Courts and drawing-rooms as well as into cottages. Learned men, physicians, surgeons, and anatomists have taken an interest in it; but, like cartomancy, it has been practised chiefly by women. Astrology is a masculine science rather, requiring arduous and involved calculations for which the earlier education of women gave them no sort of preparation; hence they seldom ventured into it. But there is no mathematical calculation in cheiromancy; it requires only observation, memory, reflection, and, above all, a good deal of that special intuition which develops into clairvoyance. This was pre-eminently the domain of women, and so we once more meet our friend the witch busied about a more congenial and much less dangerous task than preparing the unguent for the Sabbath.

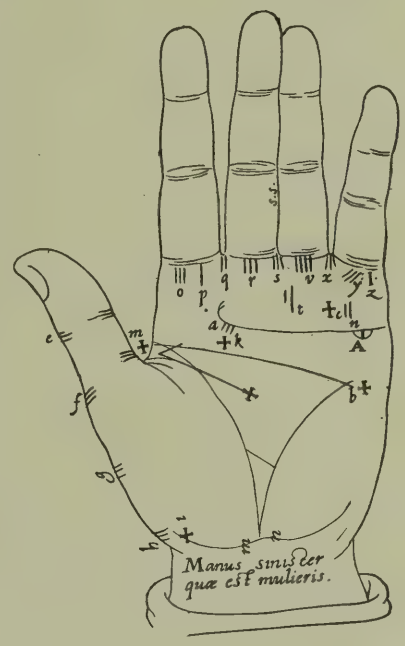


Fig. 254. Various Signs in the Left Hand of a Woman
Robert Fludd, *Utriusque cosmi historia.*

For cheiromancy also is part of the endowment of gipsies, Bohemians, Tziganes, and all those who live rather on the fringe of society, and—not having been favoured with official dignities and honours—find compensation in knowing the secrets of the hereafter, unknown to ordinary mortals. Every self-respecting witch can read the lines of the hand. Besides, what a revenge it is upon the great of the earth, upon the rich, the powerful, and the social magnates—those to whom the prosecuting magistrate is no more than an obscure body-servant—to be able to tell them by looking at their hand, "Your days are numbered; you will die at such a time; you will do what you do not want to do, and you will not do what you want to do"! And what a humiliation for kings themselves, and even more for queens—for Destiny does not spare crowned heads—to be obliged to have the gipsy brought by some secret corridor of the palace; to descend for a moment from their throne and become small and humble and say, "Here is my hand; ought I to sign this treaty, fight this battle, contract this alliance? Shall I have an heir? What will happen to me? I am only a plaything in the hand of Destiny!"

We can understand the moral part played by the soothsayer in this connexion. To some extent she personified that "just vicissitude of earthly things" which has often been the tangible manifestation of Providence.

Formerly the fortune-teller was frequently met with along the highways or in the

public places of towns, where her presence was a necessity in those ages when human life was cheap and at any moment one might find oneself unwillingly involved in some tragic adventure. Thus, at every instant of the day people were ready to consult the witch, like the young Romeo in Caravaggio's picture (Fig. 255), who, rapier at side and smiling sadly, waits for the young witch to tell him whether

Fig. 255. Gipsy Fortune-telling
Michelangelo Amerighi Caravaggio. Seventeenth-century print, engraved by Benoît Audran.
Author's collection.

he will perish in a duel or whether ruffians are lying in wait to assassinate him at the bend of some alley. For the rest, this gipsy is prepossessing and well dressed ; she should be quite able to handle her own affairs, and looks to us like a near relation of Alvigia in Aretino's *La Cortigiana*, who so complacently enumerates the multiple resources she has been able to provide for herself by putting her talents at the service of great lords.

Teniers has preserved the memory of a humbler rank of Bohemians, who had not yet been enriched through knowledge of the future and led the life of mendicants and nomads. Here are some of them (Fig. 256) who have pitched their mean camp

in the fearsome setting of a wild cavern where Faust would scarcely have dared to make his invocation to Nature. One of them is telling a blockhead of a peasant—who seems to take in very little of it—the pleasant or unpleasant events which await him on the morrow. One can guess that the half-florin he will put into her hand is eagerly looked to for making the pot boil ; there is no food yet in this utensil, soon

Fig. 256. FORTUNE-TELLERS
David Teniers. Seventeenth-century print, engraved by Chenu.

to be slung from a tripod of crossed branches. The famous painter was himself an ardent follower of the divinatory arts, and in one of his pictures has shown himself having his wife's fortune told (Fig. 257). She is timidly holding out her hand to a gipsy, hardly more prosperous than the one in the preceding picture, whose family is anxiously awaiting the financial result of her proceedings.

The most famous of cheiromancers—who was at the same time an adept cartomancer—was Mlle M. A. Le Normand, whose renown is still spread throughout France. She did not work on the highways, for, having had the luck to be cartomancer to Josephine de Beauharnais before that lady's marriage, she was able to insinuate herself into Napoleon's Court when her client became Empress.

She wrote under Josephine's name a very curious work entitled *Mémoires historiques et secrets de l'Impératrice Joséphine* (Paris, 1827). There is a good deal of imagination about this book, and the part played by the cartomancer in her relations with Napoleon is obviously exaggerated, but it does give most valuable intimate details about her two illustrious clients. The writer reveals, moreover, that

Fig. 257. David Teniers having his Wife's Fortune told
David Teniers. Engraved by Surugue, 1750.
Author's collection.

Napoleon was himself addicted to cheiromancy and even perhaps to astrology; in vol. iii, pp. 446 *et seq.*, she writes as follows:

> A germ of Cabbalistic knowledge granted to his intelligence enabled him to acquire the early assurance that in no very long time he would astonish both the world and himself. Looking one day very attentively at the hand of M. le Prince de Bénévent (Talleyrand), Napoleon exclaimed, "My astonished spirit trembles before his." On the eve of a battle he sought to discover the course of the planets in the heavens; like a new Mahomet, he claimed to be able to read in them the issue of combats.

Mlle Le Normand's book contains a document which would be above price for cheiromancy if it were quite certain that it is accurate; it consists of drawings of the

left hand of Napoleon and of Josephine, which I reproduce. Mlle Le Normand was what was known in Méhul's time as a "responsive woman," which we should render nowadays as a "remarkably gifted woman," especially with regard to imaginative gifts. Recent discoveries had made Egypt the fashion, and she turned this to account very cleverly by 'Egyptianizing' all her divinatory processes and making them derive directly from the epoch of the Pharaohs. Extremely expert as she was in the theatrical arts of presentation and get-up, it is easy to suspect that she heavily overloaded Napoleon's hand (Fig. 258) with exceptional signs. Whether that be so or not, here is her explanation of the chief signs:

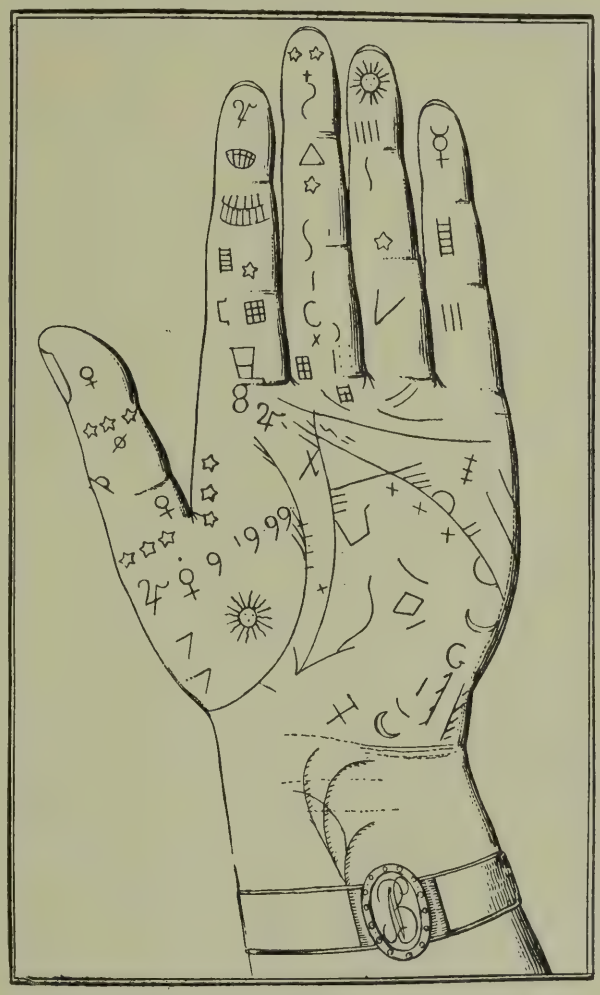


Fig. 258. Left Hand of Napoleon Bonaparte
Mlle Le Normand, *Mémoires historiques et secrets de l'Impératrice Joséphine* (Paris, 1827).

> Seen from a distance, the hand of Napoleon Bonaparte seemed brutal and unattractive, but on examining its interior one felt oneself suddenly gripped by a keen emotion. There one saw to what planet or what sign of the Zodiac every part of this hand was subject. Everything was shown there, even to the marks proclaiming the hero and conqueror. Now I lay the hand of this great man before the experience of the Cabbalist, the perspicuity of the cheiromancer, and the meditations of genius. I declare that the hand of Napoleon is the universal book, that it will be centuries, perhaps, before this book is reproduced. . . . I examine this hand carefully; all the seven planets are placed in it according to their proper dispositions. Jupiter is situated at the tip of the forefinger. His position would enable the friendship or enmity of the great and happy of the earth and century to be known. Saturn, appearing in his glory above the third joint of the middle finger, clearly demonstrates the uncertainty of good fortune and the loss of worldly possessions. . . . The two stars at the extreme tip of the finger of Saturn declare that Napoleon would end by putting on the frontlet of kings; that he would be publicly crowned in an archiepiscopal cathedral built by islanders in France. . . . The sign of Saturn, placed just below these two stars and, so to speak, controlling them, was thus of the most disastrous omen for him. On the second joint of the middle finger we see a triangle; this denotes a curious and suspicious man, sparing in his gifts except to warriors. . . . The straight line

and the letter C on the finger of Saturn, as well as the X, promise a second marriage more splendid than the first. . . . From the Milky Way to the percussion the hand of Napoleon Bonaparte has to acknowledge Mars as its lord.

I have been obliged to shorten this minute description. It is followed by that of Josephine's hand (Fig. 259):

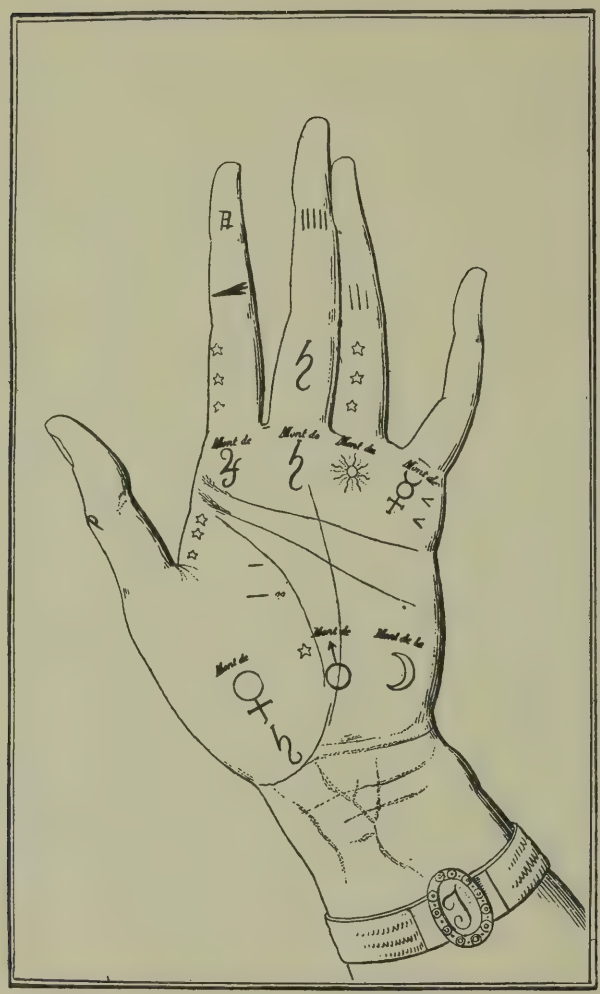


Fig. 259. Left Hand of the Empress Josephine
Mlle Le Normand, *Mémoires historiques et secrets de l'Impératrice Joséphine.*

The lines of the hand of this woman who became so famous are very multifarious. The line of life, between the thumb and forefinger, below the mount of Jupiter, toward the upper angle, marks her kindness and depicts her natural generosity; this line foretells honours and immense wealth for her; but the rupture of the two separate disunited branches shows forcibly that she was threatened with pains in the head. The mark of Saturn dominating the swell of the mount of Venus announces that Josephine would succumb finally to the weight of most violent sorrows, but the six well-formed stars, partly on the mount of Venus and partly at the upper angle of the finger of Jupiter, mark the increase of worldly possessions through chance events, such as wars and changes in the fate of empires. . . . The five little lines under the third joint of the finger of Saturn foretell toil and even a vexatious imprisonment. The three stars at the base of the first joint of the third finger announce explicitly that this woman would be crowned, that she would possess three splendid titles, but that she would retain only the first. . . . The two triangles seen on the mount of the god of travels (Mercury), and toward the roots of the finger, promise Mme de Beauharnais two legitimate children by her first marriage, but show positively that through malice or certain circumstances others would be imputed to her. The major triangle bowing under the empire of the Moon would render Mars favourable to her. Thus she was to enjoy boundless glory, have two husbands, amaze the world by her portentous fortune, and sadden her friends by her grievous and premature end.

It was in 1807 that Napoleon, yielding to the repeated urgings of Josephine, allowed Mlle Le Normand to examine his hand. She at once laid bare before his eyes his tastes and inclinations and the most secret details of his character; above all,

she announced the famous divorce, which was only a project at the moment, but was already alarming Josephine. He requested her to compile a complete record of her predictions; this document was deposited at the Prefecture of Police. Napoleon was greatly impressed by what the sibyl had announced to him. Fearing the difficulties which a woman gifted with such acute discernment might create for him if she retained her freedom of speech and action, he had her arrested and secretly detained on December 11, 1809. She remained in detention for twelve days, and was not released until the divorce was accomplished.

VII

CARTOMANCY AND THE TAROT

THE tarot is one of the most wonderful of human inventions. Despite all the outcries of philosophers, this pack of pictures, in which destiny is reflected as in a mirror with multiple facets, remains so vital and exercises so irresistible an attraction on imaginative minds that it is hardly possible that austere critics who speak in the name of an exact but uninteresting logic should ever succeed in abolishing its employment.

The dynamism of cards is beyond all discussion ; one does not argue about it, one undergoes it. This thin bundle of pasteboard strips which is shuffled over a table is for some the instrument of ruin, and the unconquerable force which gathers them round the green cloth is more imperious to them than any possible reasoning which proceeds by reducing their infatuation to an absurdity. This force is like a possession ; it is the begetter of the darkest vices—sloth, theft, and debauchery—and betrays thus the evil power which directs it at its will. For others the tarot is a mysterious door opening on a gaping and unfathomable future of illusions and hopes ; when they handle the same cards which have brought gamblers to the verge of hell and damnation their eyes light up, their mind brightens, their soul rises into the eternal spheres, and they see into the future and are possessed of that prophetic spirit which we foolishly laugh at, but which the wiser Orientals valued so much that they considered it the highest recompense that man might expect from God here below.

Taking everything into account, the strange power of this collection of rude, archaic pictures which leads man from bridge to the Cabbala, from poker to the science of Hermes, and from baccarat to the Ain-Soph, deserves to be the object of our serious thought and study. There is a certain correlation between the tarot and the theatre—that other living and stirring tarot where the actor appears, stealthy and dehumanized, embodying a principle, a law of nature, or a character, to such a degree that every time we see him reappear upon the stage we know beforehand whether we shall laugh or cry, just as it is when the cards of joy or grief slide out under the fingers of the soothsayer. And this likeness is perhaps not without its effect in the equal popularity of these two manners of expressing human thought. The twenty-two personages on the chief cards of the tarot are also actors who have allotted to themselves, on the universal stage, the totality of human parts.

Of all the divinatory arts the tarot is the most mysterious both in its origin and its manner of operating. How has it come among men? Nobody knows. We have to reject explicitly the legend—still figuring in some academic books—which attributes the invention of playing-cards to a painter named Gringonneur, who by this means wished to distract the King, Charles VI, during the long, gloomy hours of his madness. The great discovery about Gringonneur was made by Père Ménestrier in the seventeenth century. When reading one of the registers of the Chambre des Comptes for the year 1392 he came across an entry by Charles Poupart, treasurer to Charles VI, running as follows: "To Jacquemin Gringonneur, painter, for three packs of cards in gold and divers colours of several designs, to be laid before our said Lord the King for his diversion . . . LVI sous of Paris."

But this entry nowhere says that Gringonneur was the inventor of playing-cards, and we actually find traces of them in Germany as early as 1329, and later on in Belgium, Spain, Italy, and at Marseilles well before the time of Charles VI.

The learned eighteenth-century philologist Court de Gébelin, who often let himself be carried away by the torrent of his imagination, did not hesitate to ascribe an Egyptian origin to playing-cards, and to see in the tarot the famous *Book of Thoth* spoken of by various writers of antiquity. The cartomancer Alliette, Mlle Le Normand, and the philosopher d'Odoucet all seized upon this pretended antiquity and popularized the belief to such an extent that even to-day many people accept the Egyptian origin of the tarot, although this opinion is untenable in the present state of Egyptological knowledge. The attempt has also been made to attribute the invention to the gipsies, and several authors have explicitly called it the "tarot of the Bohemians." Unluckily, the Bohemians (that is, the gipsies) did not make their appearance in Europe before the first quarter of the fifteenth century, and the cards were already in the hands of the people of Spain, France, and Germany at least a century earlier. It is certain that the Bohemians at once took hold of an invention which agreed so well with their habits and their spirit of adventure, but everything contradicts the theory which would like to credit them with its paternity. It was believed recently that certain analogies had been found which enabled the tarot and its mysterious images to be linked up with the symbolism of the Greeks, and other investigators wanted to give it a Hindu or Arab origin.

The truth is much more beautiful, and those who regret to see the shattering of the illusion which represented the tarot as an Egyptian book should console themselves by thinking that its nobility is far more exalted. The tarot has no origin whatever. It remains a mystery, an enigma, a problem. At most it harmonizes with the symbolism of alchemy, another intangible doctrine which has beaten a subterranean path through the centuries, avoiding both religion and science and yet

establishing itself in their domains, sitting in their tribunes, and teaching principles the fixity and invariability of which are well contrived for baffling all historical and philosophical research.

The tarot is composed, in reality, of two different packs, and the attempt to combine them has met with imperfect success. Like those mixtures of liquids of varying densities which at once begin to separate, the heavier sinking to the bottom of the containing vessel, the two elements which compose the tarot have never amalgamated completely, and their independence is seen at the first glance.

Cartomancers divide their packs more elaborately into two series which they call the Major Arcana, numbering twenty-two cards, and the Minor Arcana, numbering fifty-six—or fifty-two according to some conventions. The Minor Arcana is nothing but the ordinary card-game, composed of four series, each containing King, Queen, Knight, and Knave, as well as ace, deuce, and so on up to ten, making fifty-six cards in all. The omission of the Knight from modern packs has reduced the number to fifty-two.

The four suits, now known as diamonds, hearts, spades, and clubs, were called shekels (or money), cups, swords, and wands respectively down to the end of the eighteenth century ; the change is not a very happy one, and the exact motive for it is not known. The wand, staff, or cudgel, the weapon of the peasant, stood for agriculture ; the cup, or sacred vessel, for the clergy ; the sword for the warrior ; and the money for commerce. There was not the slightest need to resort, as Court de Gébelin did, to the castes which divided Egypt for an explanation of this symbolism ; it was enough to note that in the Middle Ages the peasant, the priest, the soldier, and the merchant formed the complete framework of society. The magistracy was not yet in existence, and these four represented by themselves the four classes outside which there were none but outlaws, exiles, beggars, and vagrants, the irregular population of the Court of Miracles to whom legal existence was denied. These four personages can well be pictured meeting by chance round an inn table on some stormy day, the staff of the first, the cup of the second, the sword of the third, and some small change of the fourth staked on their game ; and the emblems of these four objects retained such potency that the tradition of them stayed fixed on the cards.

The corresponding figures which share these four symbols were equally borrowed from the life of the period, and this gave them an assurance of long life in the days when tradition was tenacious ; the assurance has not been falsified. The King or Lord, the Queen or Lady, the Knight, and the Servant or Knave represented the whole life of the manor, to which the rest of the population gravitated. A specimen of the style in which these characters were still shown in the eighteenth century

before the transformation effected by the French Revolution is reproduced. The designs are taken from the pack known as the Noblet tarot ; we have the King of

Fig. 260. King of Wands
Noblet tarot (seventeenth century).

Fig. 261. Queen of Swords
Noblet tarot (seventeenth century).

Fig. 262. Knight of Cups
Noblet tarot (seventeenth century).

Wands (Fig. 260), the Queen of Swords (Fig. 261), the Knight of Cups (Fig. 262), and the Knave of Coins (Fig. 264). The Ten of Coins (Fig. 263) and the Ten of

Fig. 263. Ten of Coins
Noblet tarot (seventeenth century).

Fig. 264. Knave of Coins
Noblet tarot (seventeenth century).

Fig. 265. Ten of Wands
Noblet tarot (seventeenth century).

Wands (Fig. 265) give a sufficient idea of the picturesque manner in which these emblems were treated.

The pack of Minor Arcana is quite different from that of the Major Arcana, although its incorporation may have taken place without inconvenience, and it

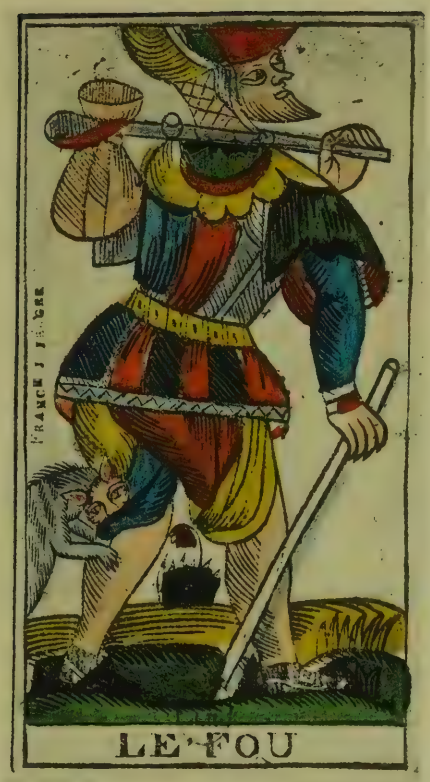
agrees on the same symbolic significations. Their origins, whatever they may have been, have certainly nothing in common, and I shall probably surprise a good many pretended experts when I tell them that the Minor Arcana—that is to say, the set of four emblems, swords, cups, coins, and wands—are of more ancient origin than the twenty-two mysterious figures upon which one is generally impelled, because of their very mystery, to confer the reputation of greater antiquity.

The oldest known pack of the Major Arcana figures—which compose the veritable tarot—is a precious set preserved in the Cabinet des Estampes of the Bibliothèque Nationale at Paris. It is known as the Tarot of Charles VI because it was for a long time believed to be one of the packs painted by Gringonneur to divert the King; but although the little figures evidently belong to the fourteenth century, nothing can be affirmed as to this supposed origin. The pack is unhappily incomplete; it contains only seventeen cards, all belonging to the series of twenty-two figures. I do not think, in any case, that the fusion of the two packs can have taken place at that time. The Tarot of Charles VI is hand-painted—as all packs had to be, wood-engraving not yet being in use.

Numerous old engraved tarots are in existence; I shall give some specimens of them in the course of enumerating the twenty-two cards of the pack in the order which was assigned to them by an inflexible tradition and was not stupidly misunderstood until the eighteenth century.

(1) The *Juggler* shows a man performing tricks before a table (see plate facing this page). (2) The *High Priestess* is the figure of a woman wearing a Papal tiara (Fig. 266). (3) The *Empress* is a woman seated on a throne and holding a sceptre (Fig. 267). (4) The *Emperor* is a personage corresponding to the last (Fig. 268). These first four figures are reproduced from a pretty French tarot, in colours, dated 1500. The next four come from a sixteenth-century tarot known as the Vergnano. They are (5) the *Pope*, giving his blessing to two persons kneeling before him (Fig. 269); (6) the *Lovers*, called the *Marriage* in some tarots (Fig. 270); (7) the *Chariot*, drawn by two horses driven by a personage in Court costume (Fig. 271); and (8) *Justice* (Fig. 272).

The series continues with (9) the *Hermit*, or *Sage*, who, like a new Diogenes, is seeking an honest man (Fig. 273); (10) the *Wheel of Fortune* (see plate facing this page), which carries a cat and a demon round with it; (11) *Strength*, a woman opening a lion's jaws (Fig. 274). These three are reproduced from a Parisian Noblet tarot of the seventeenth century. (12) The *Hanged Man* is one of the most curious cards in the tarot. I reproduce it in facsimile after the specimen in the fourteenth-century pack known as the Tarot of Charles VI, which I have mentioned above (see plate facing p. 288). The reader will remark the perfect execution in this figure,



OLD TAROTS

The Fool (Jerger tarot, seventeenth century), the Juggler (Parisian tarot, 1500), the Wheel of Fortune, and Death (the last two Noblet tarots, seventeenth century).

which belongs to an art forming a transition between the manuscript miniatures of preceding centuries and the unfortunately too rare productions of the primitive French

Fig. 266. The High Priestess
Paris tarot (1500).

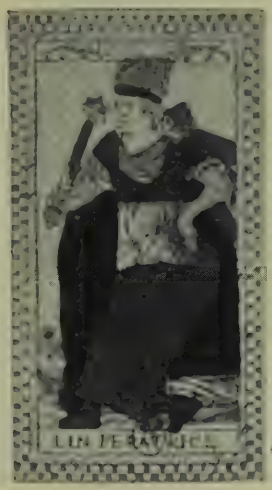


Fig. 267
The Empress
Paris tarot (1500).

Fig. 268
The Emperor
Paris tarot (1500).

painters. (13) *Death* (see plate facing p. 284) belongs again to the Noblet tarot.

(14) *Temperance* represents a woman pouring liquid from one vase into another

Fig. 269. The Pope
Vergnano tarot (seventeenth century).

Fig. 270. The Lovers
Vergnano tarot (seventeenth century).

Fig. 271. The Chariot
Vergnano tarot (seventeenth century).

Fig. 272. Justice
Vergnano tarot (seventeenth century).

(Fig. 275). (15) The *Devil*, a personage with whom we have grown well enough acquainted in the course of this work, is here personified as a he-goat with human faces on belly, knee, and chest (Fig. 276). (16) The *House of God*, *Hospital*, or

Lightning-struck Tower, shows a house struck by lightning (Fig. 277). (17) The *Star* is symbolized in various ways according to the particular tarot taken (Fig. 278). These four cards belong to a French tarot of the seventeenth century, except the *House of God*, which is from the Vergnano tarot.

(18) The *Moon* has been shown previously (Fig. 186) in a reproduction from the tarot of Charles VI remarkable for its representation of two astrologers. (19) The *Sun* is shown shining over a wall before which two children are standing (Fig. 279). (20) The *Judgment* (Fig. 280) is perhaps wrongly assimilated to the Last Judgment. (21) The *World* represents a woman surrounded by the symbols of the Four Evangelists (Fig. 281). The last card bears no number, and is sometimes placed before the *World*, which then becomes 22. It is called the Fool, and represents the classical buffoon of the courts and castles of old time (see plate facing p. 284). These last four symbols are taken from François Jerger's tarot of the seventeenth century.

Such, in its entirety, is the system of the twenty-two cards or arcana of the tarot, upon which occultists have spent themselves in commentaries of every sort without reaching the bottom of the doctrine embodied in these figures. It will be remarked that the different published tarots contain some variants of these images which it would be worth while studying. In the great Italian tarot the Pope and the High Priestess, cards 5 and 2, are replaced by Jove and Juno, doubtless to avoid the censure of Rome, for, in addition to her Papal headdress, the High Priestess was commonly called the Female Pope; Court de Gébelin calls them the High Priest and High Priestess. The same scholar calls the Chariot *Osiris*, the Devil *Typhon*, the Hermit the *Sage*, the Star the *Dog-star*, and the World *Time*. He rejects the Hanged Man, which he replaces by *Prudence*, giving this reason:

> It is the work of some wretched, presumptuous playing-card maker, who, understanding nothing of the beauty of the allegory concealed in this picture, has taken upon himself to correct it, and in doing so to disfigure it entirely. Prudence cannot be represented in a manner obvious to the eye except by the figure of a man standing upright who has one foot planted and advances the other, holding it in the air while he looks for a spot on which he can plant it securely. The title of this card was, therefore, the *Man with the Suspended Foot* (*pede suspenso*); the playing-card maker, not knowing what this meant, turned it into a man suspended by the feet.

Unluckily, Court de Gébelin did not know that the oldest tarot we possess, that of Charles VI, executed before the industry of making playing-cards existed, depicts the Hanged Man very precisely (see plate facing p. 288), with details which render the symbolism indisputable.

Certain tarots have presented card 18, the Moon, with an important variation. The two astronomers viewing the skies, seen in the beautiful plate taken from the

Fig. 273. The Hermit (Sage)
Noblet tarot (seventeenth century).

Fig 274. Strength
Noblet tarot (seventeenth century).

Fig. 275. Temperance
French tarot (seventeenth century).

Fig. 276. The Devil
French tarot (seventeenth century).

Fig. 277. House of God
Vergnano tarot (seventeenth century).

Fig. 278. The Star
French tarot (seventeenth century).

Fig. 279. The Sun
Tarot of François Jerger (seventeenth century).

Fig. 280. The Judgment
Tarot of François Jerger (seventeenth century).

Fig. 281. The World
Tarot of François Jerger (seventeenth century).

tarot of Charles VI (Fig. 186), are replaced by two dogs baying the moon ; this change is later than the fifteenth century, and it looks very much as if it were made with some kind of derisive intention difficult to explain. Card 16, the House of God, is called the *Thunderbolt* in some tarots, probably because the connexion between the title and the subject it represented was not evident. In the language of the Middle Ages *Maison-Dieu* or *Hôtel-Dieu* (' House of God ') designated an establishment where the sick poor were cared for, and with one accord commentators on the tarot have seen in this figure something of sinister import, such as a prison, want, poverty, or punishment. But an analogy can be found with the Beth-El of the Bible, which also signifies House of God, or again with the athanor, or furnace of the alchemists, which had to receive a tongue of fire from heaven, at which the imprudent who could not foresee it fell thunderstruck.

Fig. 282. The High Priest
The tarot of Etteilla.
Author's collection.

According to every occultist, the disorder apparent in the twenty-two figures of the tarot is of such potent significance that no one had ventured to change the traditional sequence except the cartomancer Alliette. This person was a one-time barber who, under the name of Etteilla and assuming the title of " professor of algebra," installed himself in the eighteenth century at the Hôtel Crillon in the Rue de la Verrerie at Paris. There he delivered oracular pronouncements which had an astounding success, although his ignorance was as great as his vanity. He published a tarot in which the Juggler was reduced to the fifteenth place, in which he added, transformed, and misrepresented various figures without any reason other than his own caprice, and in which he gave the sub-title of the *Alchemist* to the card of the Fool, which alone is enough to enlighten us as to the value of his sham exposition. Fig. 282 shows a specimen of the cards of this tarot.

Court de Gébelin tried to analyse the elements composing the tarot and to arrange the figures according to a logical order. It certainly seems that some quite definite groups may be obtained. In the first place there are six titled personages, belonging to human society :

The Pope	The Emperor	The Juggler
The High Priestess	The Empress	The Hermit

Then there are two allegorical personages :

The Devil Death

THE HANGED MAN

Twelfth card of the pack known as the Tarot of Charles VI, attributed to the painter Gringonneur (fourteenth century).

Bibliothèque Nationale, Cabinet des Estampes

Next come four cardinal virtues (if we assimilate the Hanged Man to Prudence) :

JUSTICE	TEMPERANCE
STRENGTH	PRUDENCE

three astronomical elements :

THE SUN THE MOON THE STAR

two cards relating to fatality in human life :

THE LOVERS THE WHEEL OF FORTUNE

and four elements of cosmic fatality :

THE CHARIOT	THE JUDGMENT
THE HOUSE OF GOD	THE WORLD

Lastly there is the twenty-second, the unnumbered card, the Fool, which may pervade the whole pack at will and has no determined purpose.

There is certainly nothing final about this attempt at analysis, but it may help in throwing some light on one of the most obscure subjects offered by the history of philosophy.

The endeavour has been made to assimilate the twenty-two tarot cards to the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet. If this could be done it would enable a connexion to be established with the Cabbala. The possibility was very tempting. The first card, the Juggler, accorded so well with the first letter, the strident *Aleph*, which, with the alluring demeanour of a mountebank, asserts itself at the head of the alphabet, where it seems to be set in order to purvey marvels. Unhappily, the agreement does not go far, and changes quickly into a complete disagreement which is not compensated for by the parallelism of the last letter, *Tau*, with the World surrounded by the Four Evangelists. So it is quite improbable that the tarot will be able to claim a Semitic origin.

In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries many trials were made of tarots based on a wholly different symbolism. Some of these are veritable artistic masterpieces, like the Tarot of the Chase in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Cardinal Sforza's tarot, Mantegna's tarot, various tarots called "philosophical," and so on. But these have all been abandoned, even if they were ever in use at all, for none of them had the dynamism and enticing repute of the traditional tarot without origin, hailing from no one knows where, a true gift of the gods, planted among us and throwing out such deep roots that one may predict it will last as long as the human race.

Cartomancers question the tarot about the future, employing either the twenty-two cards of the Major Arcana or the fifty-six or fifty-two of the Minor Arcana ; sometimes they mix the two series and form what they call the Great Pack. But

this last method appears to us to have been conceived by Etteilla, and we have seen how little reliance may be placed upon this fanciful diviner, who ran counter to the habitual practices of his fellow-experts by trampling tradition underfoot.

Although cards were employed as a means of divination from their first introduction into Europe, we know nothing of the procedure followed in the sixteenth century, the period when so many works were produced instructing us in cheiromancy and astrology. A single book by Marcolino da Forlì, *Le Sorti di Francesco Marcolino da Forlì, intitolate Giardino di pensieri*, published at Venice in 1540 and dedicated to Ercole d'Este, Duke of Ferrara, teaches a manner of forming combinations of playing-cards smacking of both the game of goose and divination. The author employs only the numeral cards, and his pack is otherwise incomplete, for he disclaims any wish to make use of wands, swords, or cups, confining himself to the coins, and of them selecting the King (no Queen), Knight, Knave, ten, nine, eight, seven, deuce, and ace. The questions stated are diversified enough to meet every case and serve every need; for instance, concerning men, "Will the man's lot be joyous or sad?" "Will he do better to take a beautiful or an ugly wife?" Concerning women, "Is the lady valued by him she adores?" "Will the woman have a son or a daughter?" and so forth.

The author distributes the cards in frames having a prophetic signification (Fig. 283); the frames of goodness, servitude, intelligence, death, beauty, wedlock, humility, sloth, dissimulation, and others. The cards, grouped two by two, give rise to most complicated combinations, which lead to other combinations, to allegories of good or evil actions (Fig. 284), and finally to images representing the philosophers Aristippus, Xenocrates, Stilpo, Menedemus, Heraclitus, Speusippus, Plato, Chrysippus, and the rest. The philosophers deliver oracles in Italian tercets; here are a few examples of them:

Ti porta la tua donna un'odio eterno
E più tosto, che te, veder vorrebbe
Il più bruto diavol' de l'Inferno.[1]

Here is one for a bully who is going to fight a duel:

Bella vittoria ti promette il cielo
L'amico al primo assalto occiderai
E di te non sara levato un pelo.[2]

Here is another, for a coquettish woman:

Il tuo marito è huom fatto a compasso
E accoccandola un giorno 'temerebbe
Di gir in bocca, o in man di Sathanasso.[3]

[1] "The lady [whom thou hast chosen] bears thee an eternal hatred, and would see the beastliest devil in Hell sooner than thee."
[2] "The heavens promise thee a glorious victory. Thou shalt kill thy friend at the first onset and not a hair of thine shall be hurt."
[3] "Thy husband is a man of exemplary life. If he ever strayed into any folly he would fear to fall into the mouth or hand of Satan."

32 QVADRO DI BONTA

Va a Carte 128. a Aristippo philo. e aggiunge AL RE La prima Figura che cauerai

Va a Carte 144. a Senocrate phi. e aggiunge A L'OTTO La prima carta de ponto che cauerai.

Va a Carte 132. a Stilpon philo. e aggiunge AL DIECE La prima carta de ponto che cauerai.

Va a Carte 140. a Crisippo philo. e aggiunge A L'ASSO La prima Figura che cauerai

Va a Carte 136. a Platone philo. e aggiunge AL SETTE La prima Figura che cauerai

Va a Carte 138. a Speusippo philo. e aggiunge AL NVOVE La prima carta de ponto che cauerai

Va a Carte 132. a Stilpon philo. e aggiunge AL DIECE La prima carta de ponto che cauerai.

Va a Carte 146. a Arcesilao philo. e aggiunge AL FANTE La prima Figura che cauerai.

Va a Carte 128. a Aristippo philo. e aggiunge AL DVE La prima Figura che cauerai

QVADRO DI BONTA

QVADRO DI BONTA

QVADRO DI BONTA

CROCE

Va a Carte 128. a Aristippo philoso. e aggiunge A L'OTTO La prima car. de pō to che cauerai

Va a Carte 142. a Eraclito philoso. e aggiunge AL NVOVE La prima carta de ponto che cauerai.

Va a Carte 136. a Platone philoso. e aggiunge AL RE La prima Figura che cauerai.

Va a Carte 136. a Platone philoso. e aggiunge AL DVE La prima Figura che cauerai.

Va a Carte 134. a Menedemo philo. e aggiunge AL FANTE La prima Figura che cauerai.

CROCE

QVADRO DI ATROPOS

Va a Carte 134. a Menedemo phi. e aggiunge AL DIECE La prima carta de ponto che cauerai

Va a carte 142. a Eraclito philo. e aggiunge A L'OTTO La prima carta de ponto che cauerai.

Va a carte 130. a Theodoro phi. e aggiunge AL SETTE La prima Figura che cauerai

Va a Carte 140. a Crisippo philo. e aggiunge AL FANTE La prima Figura che cauerai

Va a Carte 128. a Aristippo phi. e aggiunge AL NVOVE La prima carta de ponto che cauerai.

Va a Carte 138. a Speusippo philo. e aggiunge AL RE La prima Figura che cauerai

Va a Carte 138. a Speusippo philo. e aggiunge AI DVE La prima Figura che cauerai

Va a Carte 146. a Arcesilao phi. e aggiunge A L'ASSO La prima Figura che cauerai

Va a Carte 134. a Menedemo phi. e aggiunge AL DIECE La prima carta de ponto che cauerai

QVADRO DI ATROPOS

QVADRO DI ATROPOS

QVADRO DI ATROPOS

Va a Carte 130. a Theodoro philo. e aggiunge a l'Otto La prima Figura che cauerai.

Va a Carte 138. a Speusippo philo. e aggiunge al Diece la prima carta de pō to che cauerai.

Va a Carte 140. a Crisippo philo. e aggiūge al Cauallo La prima Figura che cauerai.

Va a Carte 146. a Arcesilao philo. e aggiunge al Diece La prima Figura che cauerai.

QVADRO DEL SERVIRE

Va a Carte 130. a Theodoro phi. e aggiunge AL DVE La prima Figura che cauerai.

Va a Carte 142. a Eraclito philo. e aggiunge A L'ASSO La prima Figura che cauerai

Va a Carte 132. a Stilpon philoso. e aggiunge AL DIECE La prima Figura che cauerai

Va a Carte 138. a Speusippo phi. e aggiunge A L'OTTO La prima carta de ponto che cauerai

Va a Carte 128. a Aristippo philo. e aggiunge AL DIECE La prima carta de ponto che cauerai.

Va a Carte 136. a Platone philo. e aggiunge A L'OTTO La prima Figura che cauerai.

Va a Carte 140. a Crisippo philo. e aggiunge AL NVOVE La prima carta de ponto che cauerai

Va a Carte 130. a Theodoro phi. e aggiunge AL DVE La prima Figura che cauerai

Va a Carte 146. a Arcesilao philo. e aggiunge al CAVALLO La prima Figura che cauerai

QVADRO DEL SERVIRE

QVADRO DEL SERVIRE

QVADRO DEL SERVIRE

QVADRO DI COGNITIONE

Va a Carte 128. a Aristippo philo. e aggiunge AL DIECE La prima Figura che cauerai.

Va a Carte 132. a Stilpon philoso. e aggiunge AL DVE La prima Figura che cauerai

Va a Carte 140. a Crisippo philo. e aggiunge A L'OTTO La prima carta de ponto che cauerai.

Va a Carte 144. a Senocrate phil. e aggiunge AL NVOVE La prima carta de ponto che cauerai

Va a Carte 130. a Theodoro phi. e aggiunge AL DIECE La prima carta de ponto che cauerai.

Va a Carte 132. a Stilpon philo. e aggiunge AL NVOVE La prima Figura che cauerai.

Va a Carte 140. a Crisippo philo. e aggiunge A L'OTTO La prima carta de ponto che cauerai

Va a Carte 136. a Platone philo. e aggiunge al CAVALLO La prima Figura che cauerai

Va a Carte 146. a Arcesilao philo. e aggiunge A L'OTTO La prima Figura che cauerai.

QVADRO DI COGNITIONE

QVADRO DI COGNITIONE

QVADRO DI COGNITIONE

Fig. 283. Method of arranging the Cards for Cartomancy in the Sixteenth Century

Marcolino da Forlì, *Le Sorti* (Venice, 1540).

But this method—doubtless contrived by Marcolino da Forlì himself—has no traditional value. It seems to have had some success in Italy, since there were three editions of the book in the sixteenth century, but is now completely neglected. It is not entirely unknown to modern cartomancers, and for that reason I thought my readers would be interested in a description of it.

We do not find, unfortunately, any further documentary matter dealing with divination by playing-cards until about the end of the eighteenth century, the time of Etteilla. It seems as if the mystery which hangs over the very origin of cards had extended itself to the methods employed for making them speak, and the gipsies, who used them during the whole of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, guard their secret very jealously without letting the least glimmer of it leak into books. There was an inclination to regard Mme la Maréchale de Clérambault as a cartomancer. Saint-Simon says that " she considered she had a great knowledge of the future *through the art of little dots*," but the famous writer himself confesses that he does not know what this is, and it is most probable that Mme la Maréchale employed one of the geomantic methods fashionable enough at that time. We know no more of a certain lady named Ambruget, who read the cards to Louis XIV and announced the victory of Denain to him, for which she got a reward of six thousand livres, nor of the cartomancer Fiasson, who was consulted by the Regent. We are forced to accept the manner of interpreting the tarot in vogue in the eighteenth century as the traditional manner of earlier centuries, although the authors who promulgated it are strongly suspect on account of their capricious tendencies.

These experts are followed in this general interpretation of the Minor Arcana. The swords, now replaced by the spades, presage unhappiness and death ; the cups, or hearts, presage happiness ; the wands, or diamonds, announce news ; and the coins, or clubs, are consecrated to money.

The King of Swords, or Spades, assimilated to David, King of the Jews, indicates a wicked man or a magistrate ; the Queen—Pallas—means a widow or a wicked woman ; the Knave—Ogier, one of Charlemagne's paladins—means a spy and an imposter. The Knight indicates a soldier or an intelligent man.

The King of Cups, or Hearts—Charlemagne—means a fair man or a ' man in office '—that is, an influential man ; the Queen—Judith, who has been regarded as a representation of Isabelle of Bavaria—means a fair woman ; the Knave—Le Hire, one of the captains of Charles VII—means a fair youth, studious and industrious. The Knight means an arrant rascal.

The King of Wands, or Diamonds—Cæsar—means a ' good and severe ' countryman ; the Queen—Rachel, or, as some say, Agnès Sorel—means a country-

Fig. 284. Method of arranging the Cards for Cartomancy in the Sixteenth Century

Marcolino da Forlì, *Le Sorti.*

woman, the feminine equivalent of the King ; the Knave—Hector, who is no other than Hector de Galard, a celebrated soldier of the fifteenth century—foretells news brought by a kind stranger. The Knight signifies, on the contrary, disunion and a departure.

Lastly, the King of Coins, or Clubs—Alexander the Great—indicates a dark and vicious man ; the Queen—Argine, whom some have wanted to assimilate to Marie of Anjou, wife of Charles VII—indicates a dark woman with an evil tongue ; and the Knave—Lancelot, another of Charlemagne's paladins—indicates a dark, spendthrift youth. The Knight indicates an indolent and slothful person.

Other interpretations of these cards, however, have been put forward, and we sometimes find ourselves confronted with discrepancies in the methods of different cartomancers. Mlle Le Normand, for instance, sees in the King of Clubs a generous and very obliging man ; in the Queen a gentle, affectionate woman, courteous and very sensitive ; she does not grow jealous unless she is upset. The King of Diamonds is a wicked and dangerous man, sometimes a soldier ; his Queen is slanderous, and has light morals ; she is jealous and an intriguer. The Knave of Diamonds represents an agent or a faithful servitor, or a stranger seeking to do mischief.

The numerical cards have various significations. In a general way the force of their meaning increases with their number ; the ten of spades, or swords, predicts a greater unhappiness than the deuce or three. There is an exception in the case of the ace, which dominates the whole suit.

One can imagine the innumerable combinations it is possible to obtain in playing off the fifty-six cards of the complete pack one against another, taking reversals into account. In this way we get, for example :

4 Kings, great honour.	4 Knaves, dangerous illness.
3 Kings, a consultation.	3 Knaves, a dispute.
2 Kings, a small discussion.	2 Knaves, anxiety.
4 Queens, a great conference.	4 tens, contradiction.
3 Queens, deception of woman.	3 tens, a new state.
2 Queens, sincere friends.	2 tens, change.
4 Knights, important business.	4 aces, good luck.
3 Knights, heated debates.	3 aces, a small success.
2 Knights, intimacy.	2 aces, deceit ; and so on.

All these combinations, as well as the explanations of them, may be found in any of the books on cartomancy now so common.

As to the Major Arcana, these by themselves have the following approximate meanings :

Fig. 285. At the Cartomancer's

La Crédulité sans réflexion, by Schenau, engraved by Halbou (eighteenth century).

(1) The Juggler, mental rectitude ; (2) the High Priestess, wisdom and science ; (3) the Empress, night and darkness ; (4) the Emperor, support and protection ; (5) the Pope, reunion and society ; (6) the Lovers, marriage ; (7) the Chariot, triumph and despotism ; (8) Justice, law and justice ; (9) the Hermit, wisdom ; (10) the Wheel of Fortune, fortune and wealth ; (11) Strength, strength and sovereignty ; (12) the Hanged Man, prudence ; (13) Death, ruin, death, and destruction ; (14) Temperance, temperance and moderation ; (15) the Devil, physical force and blindness ; (16) the House of God, want, poverty, and prison ; (17) the Star, disinterestedness ; (18) the Moon, speech and nonsense ; (19) the Sun, light and science ; (20) the Judgment, the will ; (21) the World, travel and possession of the earth ; (0) the Fool, dementia, rapture, and extravagance.

These simple meanings may also be modified by one another ; much more so if the twenty-two Major Arcana are mixed with the numeral cards. The immense number of the resulting combinations forbids us to enlarge upon this subject.

It is to be noted that many people read the cards merely by studying the different combinations—mathematical, in a way—into which they fall, and give such interpretations of them as they know to have been taught, either in books or by oral tradition. But there are others for whom the figures of the tarot are no more than material symbols on which they let their eyes dwell for the purpose of inducing clairvoyance. They stare fixedly at the images, cease to see them after a while, and are in a state of more or less profound hypnosis when they become perceptive of the conditions of that future they are asked to unveil.

Cartomancers of this sort are reputed the best. D'Odoucet, however, who was one of the most erudite and conscientious of the cartomancers and seems to have possessed some real mathematical ideas, expressly condemns this method in his very rare work *Science des signes ou Médecine de l'Esprit* (Paris, about 1795). " Above all," says he, " let the cartomancer never believe that he works by *inspiration* or *magic*; he works purely by the science acquired through his studies and his intelligence." In spite of this warning, there are numerous ' clairvoyant ' cartomancers, who induce a state of trance in themselves which leaves them extremely fatigued after every consultation. With such the harmless art of reading the cards becomes one of the most baffling mysteries of occultism ; we shall study this aspect in a later chapter. The celebrated Mlle Le Normand was a cartomancer of this kind, for she mentions in her *Mémoires* the ecstatic tendencies which she manifested from early childhood in the convent of the Benedictines at Alençon, where she was educated. She expresses them by the characteristic phrase, " I was a waking somnambulist ! "

So here we come back to the pythoness of antiquity ; the seer, the inspired one, the sibyl, whose tripod was only a material instrument helping to induce trance and

to facilitate the reception of the Spirit. To-day the tarot replaces the tripod; the phenomenon remains identical and quite as disturbing, but the procedure is better adapted to the requirements of modern society, and it has been successfully introduced into the humblest cottages as well as the most sumptuous dwellings.

Fig. 286. Mlle Le Normand reading the Cards to the Empress Josephine at Malmaison

Engraved by Normand *fils*; *Mémoires historiques et secrets de l'Impératrice Joséphine* (Paris, 1827).

Cartomancy has been practised by persons belonging to the most varied classes of society. From the hands of the gipsies the tarot has passed into those of the village witch, a sedentary gipsy who has invariably added this divinatory art to her other secret talents. The witch was, in fact, for long the type of the diviner; even in Balzac's time many a cartomancer still lorded it in some wretched shanty in company with an owl, a black cat, and a toad, relics of the age of the Sabbath. A beautiful eighteenth-century print, *La Crédulité sans réflexion* (Fig. 285), engraved by Halbou after a picture by Schenau, gives a typical presentation of the hovel—which has long been accepted as her classic dwelling—of the cartomancist witch with ladies of quality for clients. Dressed in rags, with a necklace of teeth and knucklebones, the prophetess has spread the Great Pack in front of her, and is interpreting it with the hypocritical smile of the go-between. Before her is a cup containing the coffee-grounds which she uses as a help in reading

the future. A dried bat is hung on the wall, and an owl perches on the shattered window. A lady attired in much finery listens enraptured to what the witch is telling her ; she is not alarmed, but the waiting-woman behind her is dying with fear, and is incapable of keeping back the little dog who yaps at the witch's bristling-tailed cat. At the right of the foreground some mysterious personage whom we cannot identify is shut in a cage and concealed by a curtain. It may be a demon like the one grinning behind the door in Albrecht Dürer's print of the four witches (Fig. 26) or some inquisitive soul who has hidden there to overhear the lady's secrets. It is difficult to make out the painter's exact intentions.

But not every pythoness, happily, had the aspect of these grim creatures ; the ' drawing-room witch ' had already made her appearance in the world, and Mlle Le Normand seems to have been one of the most finished of the type. We see her at Malmaison in an evening gown reading the Great Pack—like her ugly sister in Schenau's picture—to the Empress Josephine (Fig. 286) ; they are in the famous semicircular room, which is still preserved. This was the time when the misfortunes of the Empress were already foreshadowed, and she breaks into tears when the cartomancer warns her of her divorce. Napoleon, uneasy at the influence Mlle Le Normand has acquired over her client, is entering furtively at the moment when the seer issues her pontifical announcement with a theatrical gesture, while the weeping Josephine makes this bitter reflection : " I saw the kind of prophecy made me when I was divorced sweeping forward with giant strides. It told me that from the moment Napoleon left me he would cease to be happy."

Mlle Le Normand's career was exceptionally brilliant. She began to give consultations in Paris in 1790, and among those who entered her consulting-room were Robespierre, Saint-Just, Marat, Hébert, the Princess de Lamballe, Hoche, the Comte de Provence, who became Louis XVIII, Danton, Camille Desmoulins, Mme Tallien, Barras, Bonaparte—who twice had her imprisoned—Talleyrand, Talma, and the Duchesse d'Angoulême. To all she revealed the destiny awaiting them. Her main achievement, however, was the creation of a new type—the Society cartomancer. It was afterward followed by Mme Clément and Julia Orsini, and by the majority of fortune-tellers in our own day. These ladies pronounce their oracles in the comfort of luxurious suites of rooms, and have shed the Sabbatic attributes of the witch. At most they retain, by way of keeping up a tradition, a Siamese cat worth several thousand francs on a velvet cushion.

VIII

THE DIVINATORY ARTS

THE chief problem which has preoccupied humanity in every age would appear to be knowledge of the future. It cannot be doubted that if many of us could see the fate in store for us we should often be frightened by it, and we may consider it fortunate that Nature has screened our eyes with a veil which permits all illusions and authorizes all hopes. But what an advantage also it would be for every one of us in particular if, unknown to the others, he could just lift a corner of the veil and see what the morrow would bring!

So, alongside astrology, cheiromancy, and cartomancy—which we may properly call the major arts of divination—it is not surprising to find a number of minor arts born of human ingenuity, hatched nobody knows how and scattered all down the course of the centuries, each one enjoying a longer or shorter period of popular favour.

We know that the Romans practised haruspicy, which consisted in the inspection of the entrails of slaughtered animals, and they would roast the shoulder-blade of a sheep and examine the cracks produced in the bone. These barbarous processes had little interest, but were still preserved by Christians down to the eleventh century, and were the object of many conciliar interdictions. In his *Historiæ Francorum*, liber vii, caput xxix, Gregory of Tours reports that Claude, sent to Tours by King Guntchramnus, consulted the haruspices in the barbarous manner—" ut consuetudo est barbarorum aruspicia intendere coepit." But the easier and more seemly method of stichomancy was preserved still longer. This consisted in opening a book at random and interpreting the first words read in prophetic fashion. This usage was also imitated from antiquity, which made use of the books of Homer or Virgil; hence the appellations " Homeric lots " and " Virgilian lots "—*sortes Virgilianæ*—given to this kind of divination. The Christians substituted the Gospels and the Bible, and the Virgilian lots became the " lots of the saints "—*sortes sanctorum*. This custom was forbidden by many Councils, but was nevertheless openly practised in the churches by the very clergy. Gregory of Tours again tells us (liber iv, caput xvi) that when Chramnus, in revolt against his father, Chlothacharius, arrived at the *castrum*, or fort, of Dijon he was received by the bishop, St Tetricus, and " the priests, having laid three books upon the altar, the Prophets,

the Apostles, and the Gospels, prayed the Lord to cause them to know what would happen to Chramnus." Further on (liber v, caput xiv) the same author shows us Merovechus, in a scene of sombre and tragic grandeur, hiding from the anger of Fredegonde and shutting himself up for three days and nights in the basilica of St Martin of Tours to pray at the tomb of the Saint and consult the Psalms, the Book of Kings, and the Gospels. At the dawn of the third day he opened the Book of Kings and read the verse, " Tradidit vos Dominus Deus noster in manibus inimicorum vestrorum." [1] Thereupon he wept bitterly, and went out of the basilica.

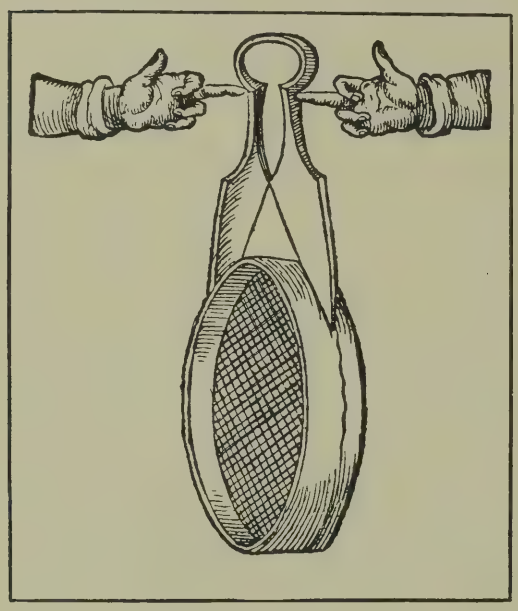


Fig. 287. Manner of making the Sieve turn

Cornelius Agrippa, *Opera omnia* (Lyons, Beringos, sixteenth century).

A form of divination much used from the earliest years of the Middle Ages down to our own day, in some French provinces, is coscinomancy, or divination by a balanced sieve. The early phrase was " spinning the *sas* "—an old word which means sieve or strainer. It is notable that all peoples have ascribed divinatory potentialities to objects in rotation. A mere knife spinning on its collar upon a table is supposed by many people to be capable of bringing bad luck to a house. The gyratory movement is of a character essentially mysterious or even diabolic, as some hold, and divination by the sieve is certainly one of the most perplexing methods in existence. The *Opera omnia* of Cornelius Agrippa (vol. ii, chapter xxi, of the part attributed to Pietro d'Abano) contains an invaluable figure indicating the manner of suspending the sieve in order to make it vaticinate (Fig. 287). The author says that

> the sieve is suspended by tongs or pincers [*forcipes*], which are supported by the middle fingers of two assistants. So may be discovered, by the help of the demon [*dæmone urgente*], those who have committed a crime or theft or inflicted some wound. The conjuration consists of six words—understood neither by those who speak them nor by others—which are DIES, MIES, JESCHET, BENEDOEFET, DOWIMA, and ENITEMAUS; once these are uttered they compel the demon to cause the sieve, suspended by its pincers, to turn the moment the name of the guilty person is pronounced (for all the suspected persons must be named), and thus the culprit is instantly known. . . . More than thirty years since I made use of this manner of divination three times; the first time was on the occasion of a theft which had been committed; the second on account of certain nets or

[1] " The Lord our God has betrayed you into the hands of your enemies."

> snares of mine used for catching birds being destroyed by some envious one; and the third in order to find a lost dog which belonged to me and by which I set great store. In every said attempt my fortune was to succeed; yet I stopped notwithstanding after the last time for fear lest the demon should entangle me in his snares.

Sometimes the sieve was balanced on a central pivot and spun; then it would stop the moment the guilty person was named.

It is apparent that Cornelius Agrippa (or Pietro d'Abano) attributes the working of this apparatus to a demon, whom we may regard to some extent as the ancestor of the turning table. But we have to weigh the opinion of Belot (*Œuvres,* Part I, chapter xxi), who states expressly that the nippers must be balanced " on the thumb-nails of two persons, who are to look at each other and to take care, above all, to concentrate their forces on the middle of the nails, the nail of the finger of Saturn being more proper than that of the thumb." Belot takes up the cudgels on behalf of this divinatory procedure:

> Since lots were permitted in antiquity and when the Church was at her beginning, let it be permitted me also by our masters to give without scandal, following the ancients, the lots of the sieve as our ancestors used from the reign of Charlemagne and his son, Charles the Bald, and truly without let in the Church herself, as we see in our ancient rituals.

The four elements had each its mode of divination. Pyromancy, or pyroscopy, was divination by fire; certain objects, chiefly pounded peas, were thrown in the fire, and observation kept on their manner of burning; if they caught fire quickly the augury was good. Aeromancy was divination by examining the variations and different phenomena of the air; its nature is not very clear. Hydromancy—also known as hydatoscopy, if the augury is drawn from the examination of rain-water, or pegomancy, if spring-water is used—comprised many different experiments. Practitioners would dangle a ring from a thread in a pot of water and study the noise it made in striking against the sides of the pot; or they would study the circles formed by three little stones thrown into still water, or would throw a drop of oil into water and see future events in it as in a mirror. To this mode of divination may be affiliated divination by coffee-grounds or by the 'vases of Artephius,' to be mentioned later. Geomancy is divination by earth; it was also known as the Art of the Little Dots, which was formerly confused with cartomancy. It consisted in throwing a handful of earth on the ground and examining the figure thereby formed, or even in marking dots at random on a sheet of paper and interpreting their position. As frontispiece to the second volume of his work *Utriusque cosmi historia* Robert Fludd has given a schematic figure combining the principal modes of divination which man, as the Ape of God, can exercise on earth by drinking in the celestial

light (Fig. 288). A number of dotted figures formed in the manner named and capable of interpretation are seen on a shield to the right of this design. According to Cornelius Agrippa in *De Occulta philosophia* (Cologne, 1533; Book II, chapter xlviii), the geomantic figures number no more than sixteen; here is the explanation he gives of three of them:

Great fortune, great help, commencing tutelage — Beardless youth — Prison, constraint

I may mention further lecanomancy, which was performed by letting precious stones drop into water; a mysterious little whistling resulted which announced the thing desired. Aleuromancy and alphitomancy were almost analogous processes; cakes were made of wheat or barley flour which could not be swallowed by anyone guilty of a given misdeed.

Alectoromancy, or alectryomancy, is divination by a cock; it is a famous and very ancient method. Belot explains it thus:

> He then who desires to know concerning some matter, whether it be a robbery, a larceny, or the name of a successor, must make upon a very smooth spot a circle which he shall divide into as many parts as there are letters in the alphabet. This done, he shall take grains of wheat and shall place them on each letter, beginning with A and so continuing, while he says this verse, *Ecce enim veritatem*,[1] etc. The wheat being thus placed, let him take a young cock or cockerel, perfectly white, and cut its claws; then, having set down this cock, he must take care to watch upon which letters he eats the grains of corn, and, having noted or written these letters upon paper, he must gather them together and then will find the name that he desires to know.

The Emperor Valens is known to have employed this process in order to learn the name of his successor in the Empire. The cock indicated the letters THEOD; the Emperor interpreted them as Theodorus, and had every one of that name killed. But Theodosius succeeded him.

Then there was axinomancy, or divination by the hatchet, "which," says de l'Ancre, "they struck into a round stake, and by the quivering or movement that it made they judged of thefts or other great crimes." Cephalomancy was divination by a donkey's head, and cromniomancy consisted of laying onions on which certain names had been written upon the altar on Christmas Day; when these were planted the one which sprouted first would give the required indication.

[1] "Behold then the truth."

Dactylomancy was performed by means of rings put on the fingernails, and daphnomancy by means of a branch of laurel, which announced a fortunate augury if it crackled in burning.

Astragalomancy, or astragyromancy, was performed, among the ancients, with knucklebones marked with the letters of the alphabet. Later on dice were substituted for the bones, the figures from one to twelve upon them representing the twelve principal divisions of human language. This latter method was even turned into a complicated art pertaining at once to polite diversion and divination, which was expounded at length in a book by Maistre Laurens l'Esprit, *Le Passe-temps de la fortune des dez, ingénieusement compilé pour response à vingt questions.* One of the pages of this volume is reproduced in Fig. 289, in which the reader will not fail to notice a certain analogy with Marcolino da Forlì's book on cartomancy previously mentioned (Figs. 283 and 284). The combinations of dice here displayed refer to other figures which deliver oracles.

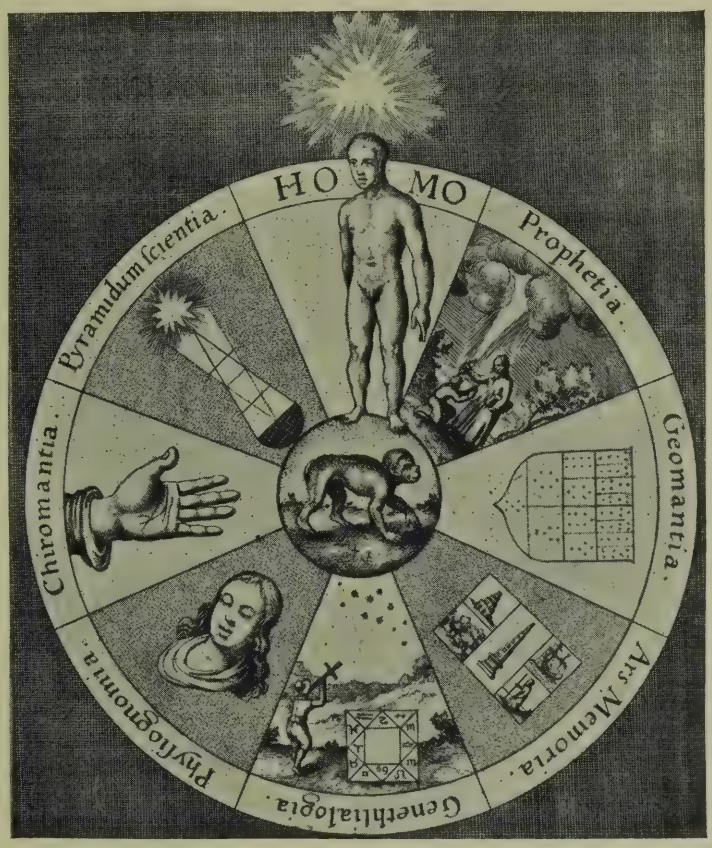


Fig. 288. Diagrammatic Synopsis of the Divinatory Arts
Robert Fludd, *Utriusque cosmi historia* (Oppenheim, 1619).

A divination based on the observation of the movements of the flame of a lamp was called lampadomancy. Libanomancy was performed by means of the smoke of incense, and lithomancy by means of precious stones. Very curious was margaritomancy, or divination by a pearl. "The pearl is to be enchanted," says de l'Ancre, "and shut in a pot; then if it chance that the name of a thief be pronounced the pearl will leap, striking against the pot." Molybdomancy was divination by melted lead; drops of it were allowed to fall into water, and the resulting noises and hissings listened to. Cleidomancy was performed with a key suspended by a thread from the nail of a young virgin's third finger, this verse from the Psalms being repeated meanwhile: "Exurge, Domine, adjuva nos, et redime nos propter nomen sanctum

tuum." [1] The key would revolve if the thing asked could be affirmed. Belomancy, dear to soldiers of former time, was divination by arrows, onychomancy by means of nails reflecting the sun's rays, and oinomancy by means of wine; we shall see an example of this later. Ovomancy was an operation in which the germ of an egg played the part of divining agent, and ornithomancy, or orniscopy, was an ancient divination by the flight of birds practised by the augurs at Rome. In sideromancy an odd number of straws were thrown upon red-hot iron, "and," says de l'Ancre, "while they burned judgment was formed from the movement of the straws, from their twisting or bending, from the fiery figures of the sparkling of the flames, and from the flight and course of the smoke and otherwise."

A special place must be given to the divination known as catoptromancy, or crystallomancy, which was performed with a magic mirror or lens. It is one of the most ancient forms of divination. Varro states that it came from Persia. Pausanias (*Achaia*, VII, 22) asserts that in a temple of Ceres he saw a spring which was consulted by means of a mirror with a thread fastened to it; the thread was immersed in the water, and the diviner saw in the mirror whether sick persons were to be cured. Pythagoras too had a magic mirror, which he held up to the moon before reading the future in it; in this way he was imitating the Thessalian sorcerers, who had employed the method from the remotest antiquity. Magic mirrors are mentioned by Spartianus, Apuleius, Pausanias, and St Augustine. In the twelfth century John of Salisbury calls the practitioners of this method *speculatorii*. According to Belot, who relies on the evidence of certain rabbis, this form of divination derives its origin from that in use among the Jews, which consisted of looking at the precious stones decorating the ephod, or breastplate, of the High Priest for the purpose of reading the future in them.

During the war with the Milanese under Francis I a magician, so de l'Ancre states, caused the Parisians to see everything that took place at Milan by means of a magic mirror; he followed the procedure of Pythagoras in first exposing the face of his mirror to the moon. The same author tells us that in 1530 a priest of Nuremberg saw some treasure in a magic crystal; he had an excavation made at the spot indicated, but when he descended into the hole he had caused to be dug the earth fell in and engulfed him.

The use of the magic mirror is properly the reverse operation to necromancy. Instead of evoking the dead, mortals who are not yet in being are made to appear in the mirror, or if they do exist they will be seen performing some action which will not in reality take place until later. In the sixteenth century the method was widely diffused in France; in his *Recherches de la France* Pasquier relates that Catherine

[1] "Arise, O Lord, help us and deliver us for Thy holy Name's sake."

La fieur de la Preſze. Si la femme doit enfanter fils ou fille.

va a la ſpher du criſta. hor la riu. Giorda
va a la ſphere de Apol dans la riui. Diano.
va a la ſphere du criſta. dans la riuie Faſin
va a la ſphere de Iupite dans la riu Giorda
va a la ſphere de la vier. hors la riui Fondo.
va a la ſphere de Libra hors la riu. Cariddi.

va a la ſphere de Apol. hors la ri. Tronto.
va a la ſphere de Apol. dans la riu. Tronto.
va a la ſphere du criſta dans la riuie Nubē
va a la ſphere de Iupit. dans la riu. Eimolo
va a la ſphere de la vier. hors la riuie. Indo.
va a la ſphere de Libra hors la ri. Dānubio.

va a la ſphere de Apol. hors la riuie Dānu.
va a la ſphere du criſta. hors la ri Rodano.
va a la ſphere du criſta dans la riuiere Sal.
va a la ſphere de Iupit. dans la riui Melſo.
va a la ſphere de la vier. hors la riu. Metau.
va a la ſphere de Libra hors la riu. Flmegi.

va a la ſphere de Apol hors la riuie Nera
va a la ſphere du criſta. hors la riu. Maſola.
va a la ſphere de Iupit dans la riu Cariddi.
va a la ſphere de Iupit dans la riu. Pauara.
va a la ſphere de la vier hors la riu. Potēza.
va a la ſphere de Libra hors la ri. Loſcano.

va a la ſphere de Apol. hors la riuiere Potenza.
va a la ſphere du criſta. hors la riuiere Mellino
va a la ſphere de la vier. dans la riuiere Boreo.
va a la ſphere de Libra hors la riuiere Neſtore.

va a la ſphere de Apol. hors la riuiere Toſcano.
va a la ſphere du criſta hors la riuiere Maladua
va a la ſphere de la vier dans la riuiere Dannubio.
va a la ſphere de Libra dans la riuiere Ambo.

va a la ſphere de Apol hors la riu Bicina
va a la ſphere du criſta. hors la riu Topino.
va a la ſphere de Iupit. hors la riui. Iſchio.
va a la ſphere de Iupit dans la ri Rodano
va a la ſphere de la vier. dans la riui. Genna.
va a la ſphere de Libra dans la riu. Chiane.

va a la ſphere de Apol dans la riu Sannio
va a la ſphere du criſta dans la riuiere Po.
va a la ſphere de Iupit hors la riu Peſchie.
va a la ſphere de Iupit. dans la riu. Tanar
va a la ſphere de la vier. dans la ri Lemmina.
va a la ſphere de Libra dans la riuie. Forte.

va a la ſphere de Apol dans la riu Labico.
va a la ſphere du criſtr. dans la riui Caina
va a la ſphere de Iupit. hors la riu. Vermig.
va a la ſphere de la vier. hors la riu. Addice
va a la ſphere de la vier. dans la riui. Oglio.
va a la ſphere de Libra dans la riui Melſo.

va a la ſphere de Apol. dans la riuiere Dolo.
va a la ſphere du criſta dans la riuiere Serro.
va a la ſphere de Iupit. hors la riuiere Elicon.
va a la ſphere de la vier. hors la riuiere Cāriddi.
va a la ſphere de Libra hors la riuiere Arab.
va a la ſphere de Libra dans la riuiere Oglio.

Fig. 289. Divination by Dice

Maistre Laurens l'Esprit, *Le Passe-temps de la fortune des dez, ingénieusement compilé pour response à vingt questions* (Paris, 1534).

de Médicis had a magic mirror in which she saw everything that happened in France and what the future held in store for her. Once it showed her a body of Jesuits seizing the reins of power ; this sent her into a violent rage. The mirror was still to be seen at the Louvre in 1688. It is also said that Père Cotton, the confessor of Henri IV, showed him in a magic mirror all the plots that were hatched in the study of every prince in Europe.

The manner of using the magic mirror is very simple, but iconographic documents

Fig. 290. Witch using a Magic Mirror
Original drawing by Leonardo da Vinci. Library of Christ Church, Oxford.

dealing with it are excessively rare. We saw this instrument figuring in Rembrandt's picture of Doctor Faustus (Fig. 83). Leonardo da Vinci, who has left us various scenes of sorcery, included a magic mirror in a strange drawing now at Christ Church, Oxford (Fig. 290). It shows a witch holding a mirror up to another witch. The face of an old man appears in the mirror. The scene is difficult to explain unless it is symbolic ; it is possible to find an alchemistic meaning in it rather than the traditional use of the mirror for divination. Formerly the eyes of a person to whom the mirror was presented were blindfolded. When the detection of a thief was sought a blessed candle had to be lighted and brought near the mirror, or,

failing that, near a pot filled with holy water ; a virgin had then to pronounce these words : " Angelo bianco, Angelo santo, per la tua santità e per la mia virginità, mostrami che ha tolto questa cosa "—that is, " White angel, holy angel, by thy holiness and by my virginity show me who has stolen this thing ! " Instantly the image of the thief would appear in the mirror or on the surface of the water. This method is cited by Rimual in *Consilia in causis gravissimis* ; this author is totally unknown to us, but is mentioned in the *Revue Archéologique* (1846, p. 161).

A splendid manuscript preserved in the Library at Troyes, the title-page of which I reproduce (see plate facing p. 216), contains a very well executed miniature representing a pythoness armed with a wand who is showing a man a magic mirror shaped like a goblet ; he sees future events reflected in this instrument (see plate facing p. 308). I shall talk further on of the alchemistic meaning suggested by this symbolic design and by the hieroglyphs surrounding it ; I may just note in passing that this way of consulting the mirror is free from any complications and accessory practices.

The *Revue Archéologique* (1846, p. 156) gives an illustration—too poor to be reproduced here—and description of a magic mirror which had belonged to a Spanish family at Saragossa since the seventeenth century. This was a convex metal mirror, ornamented with a diabolic figure and the words *Muerte*, *Etam*, *Teteceme*, and *Zaps*. Figures would appear on the surface of any liquid if the mirror were directed toward it.

This art is very widespread in England nowadays. Its practitioners call themselves ' crystal-readers ' or ' crystal-gazers.' They recommend maintaining a complete silence and remaining in meditation, without thinking of anything, for a quarter of an hour before consulting the mirror ; they call this ' letting the mind remain blank.' They make use by preference of an egg-shaped globe of crystal ; Great Britain does a considerable trade in this article. Sometimes they employ an even simpler method ; they put a very bright sixpence into the bottom of a glass of water and hypnotize themselves by gazing at it, when insight into the future is soon attained.

The procedure known as the ' three vases of Artephius ' is a divinatory method related to the magic mirror, hydromancy, and oinomancy, and summarizes them all. It is expounded only, to my knowledge, in two unpublished manuscripts in the Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal—No. 3009, the second part of which contains *L'Art magique d'Artephius et de Mihinius, divisée* [sic] *en huit propositions*, and No. 2344, which is a repetition of the other, with the same title but a less careful text. On p. 14 of No. 3009 we come across a naïve figure (Fig. 291), drawn in a rudimentary manner. At the foot of the drawing " the hill upon which one works " is represented.

Higher up is the table on two trestles in a " solitary and fitting high place." It has to be enclosed in some sort of structure of which the author gives no explanation, but which he represents as being of " wood pierced all about with holes to receive the rays of the moon and stars." Upon the table are three vases, one of earthenware, containing oil of myrrh, another of green earthenware, containing wine, and a third of white earthenware, containing water. The last two may be replaced by vases of copper and glass respectively. A cloth is placed on the vase of water, which has a lighted candle beside it; two more of these stand in the spaces between the three vases. It seems that three instruments are necessary—a wand of poplar-wood, " half without bark," a bright knife, and a pumpkin-root; these are also shown in the drawing, but the author has unluckily forgotten to tell us their use.

Fig. 291. The Three Vases of Artephius
L'Art magique d'Artephius et de Mihinius (Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, manuscript No. 3009). Eighteenth century.

He does, however, tell us that

> Artephius made an instrument and prepared it with vases in this manner: by the earthenware vase is the past known, by the copper vase the present, and by the glass vase the future. He arranges them in yet another fashion; that is to say, in place of the earthenware vase a silver vase full of wine is set, and the copper one is filled with oil, and the glass with water. Then you will see present things in the earthen vase, past things in the copper, and future things in the silver. . . . All must be shielded from the sun; and the weather must be very calm, and must have been so for at least three days. By day you will work in sunny weather, and by night in the moonlight and by the light of the stars. The work must be done in a place far from any noise, and all must be in deep silence. The operator is to be garbed all in white, and his head and face covered with a piece of red silken stuff or fine linen, so that nothing may be visible but the eyes. . . . In the water the shadow of the thing is seen, in the oil the appearance of the person, and in the wine the very thing itself; and there is the end of this invention.

We still have to consider, as a variant of hydromancy, the celebrated process of divination by coffee-grounds. This was already in existence in the eighteenth

THE MAGIC MIRROR

Miniature from *La Très Sainte Trinosophie* (eighteenth century), attributed to the Comte de Saint-Germain.

Bibliothèque de Troyes, Manuscript No. 2400

century, but naturally cannot have been anterior to the introduction of this beverage into Europe. The treatise regarding the process published by Tomaso Tomponelli gave reason for thinking that it was first conceived in Italy. Our modern pythonesses all employ it; they pour some coffee-dregs on a white unglazed plate, allow them to settle, and then carefully drain off the water. The particles of coffee-grounds left on the plate form a multitude of patterns which can be interpreted in various ways; thus, circles mean money, and consequently predict wealth more or less abundant as they are more or less numerous. A crown means State success, a diamond good fortune in love, and if a number is found it is the one which should be taken in some lottery or other, because it will certainly win. I may add that for the procedure to succeed it must be accompanied by three formulas, which seem to be borrowed from the language which Swedenborg interpreted as being that of demons. When the water is added to the ground coffee in the coffee-pot the operator must say, "Aqua boraxit venias carajôs"; when the mixture is stirred with a spoon he must say, "Fixatur et patricam explinabit tornare," and in pouring the dregs on the plate he must say, "Hax verticaline, pax Fantas marobum, max destinatus, veida porol." Many witches forget this part of the process, and then people are surprised that their predictions are not correct!

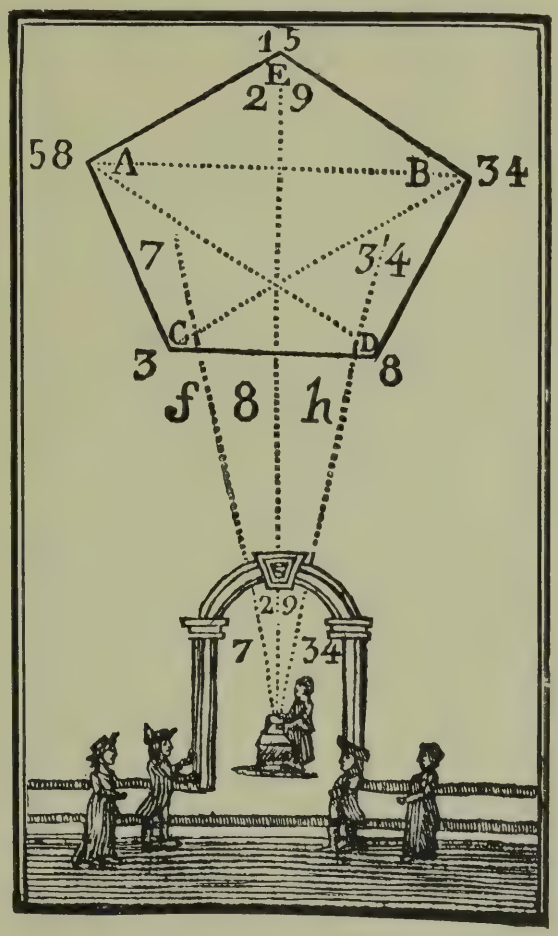


Fig. 292. Pentagonal Figure for winning a Lottery
Albumazzar de Carpentari, *La Clef d'Or* (Avignon, 1815).

To the divinatory arts enumerated above it might be fitting to add the processes known as 'Cabbalistic,' so much used in the eighteenth century. The great adventurer Casanova knew how to turn them to very good account, if we may believe all he relates in his *Mémoires*. These processes consisted of delivering oracles by forming numerical combinations; a most complicated specimen of them may be found in a manuscript at the Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal entitled *La Cabale intellective*. I shall refer the inquiring reader to this direct, as its rules are too difficult to be expounded here, even in a brief summary. The different ways of winning in lotteries

and guessing the number to be drawn are both dealt with. Even in our day the lottery is still drawn every week in Italy, and a method perfectly applicable to it, and very simple besides, has been bequeathed us in a book entitled *La Clef d'Or ou l'Astrologue fortuné devin, traduit de l'Italien d'Albumazzar de Carpentari, par M. Peregrinus*, the author of which is thereby revealed as one of the benefactors of humanity.

In order to grow rich quickly it is enough to have a design called the Pentagonal Figure, so I hasten to offer it to my readers (Fig. 292). At first sight it would seem grimly mathematical, but it holds the secret of the Pactolus for all who will study the author's explanation attentively. Here it is :

> One of my friends having begged me to explain the virtue of the Pentagonal Figure, I drew it for him just as you see it in order to comply with his wishes. I also caused him to remark that in writing the chosen numbers as shown in the said figure he should begin with the number last chosen and place it in the angle A ; next he should put the fourth chosen in the angle B, the third in the angle D, the second in the angle C, and, in conclusion, the first number chosen he should put in the upper angle E. This being done, I told him further that he must add number A to the corresponding numbers B and C, and number C to numbers A and D ; next he must add up numbers C and A and the sum of A and B, and in the same way D and C and the above-named sum, dividing and multiplying the results by the upper number E. In this way he would find three numbers which very often gave the trey, the double, and the winner.

The royal lottery was operated from 1758 onward in France ; when it was suppressed under Louis Philippe all the secret methods of winning it were forgotten in that country. It was formerly believed that the winning numbers were shown in dreams; thus, if one should happen to dream of an ostrich a stake must go on number 73 the very next morning ; if of a barometer the numbers 13, 17, and 49 were all indicated ; a negro meant that numbers 18 and 68 would win, and a squirt numbers 1, 2, or 48. And, since one could not always be sure of dreaming, the following prayer—piously transmitted to us by Collin de Plancy—was to be said and written on virgin parchment and put under one's pillow :

> Lord Jesus Christ, Who hast said, " I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life," for Thou hast cherished truth and hast shown me the secrets of Thy wisdom whereby again this night the unknown things which are not revealed save to the lowly shall be revealed to me, send me the angels Uriel, Rubiel, and Barachiel to teach me which numbers I must choose to win, by Him Who will come to judge the quick and the dead and the times by fire.

IX

RHABDOMANCY, OR THE ART OF USING THE DIVINING-ROD

A MODE of divination performed by means of little sticks was called rhabdomancy in antiquity. We find mention of it in the Prophet Hosea (iv, 12): "Populus meus in ligno suo interrogavit et baculus ejus annuntiavit ei" ("My people ask counsel at their stocks, and their staff declareth unto them"). In Psalm cxxv, 3, we also read: "Non reliquet Dominus virgam peccatorum super sortem justorum" ("The Lord will not let the rod of the wicked rest upon the lot of the righteous"). These passages have been interpreted as referring to rhabdomancy. Further, it was in pursuance of a divinatory procedure of the same nature that Moses (Numbers, chapter xvii) laid up in the Tabernacle of Witness twelve rods, each inscribed with the name of one of the tribes of Israel, as a means of knowing which tribe should provide the head of the people. But I am not sufficiently acquainted with the details of these operations to be able to assert that the rhabdomancy of antiquity was like the art of the divining-rod as we find it in the sixteenth century. At this time it was chiefly practised in Germany, upon a very large scale, and enjoyed a considerable popularity. It has not fallen out of favour even in our times, which have seen it to some extent sanctified by science.

The wand of the magician and sorcerer plays an eminently æsthetic part in all the operations of occultism. Moses is the great magician of antiquity, instructed, St Paul tells us, in all the sciences and secrets of the Egyptians; and he is never without his miraculous rod when he performs all his wonders before the eyes of his marvelling people. The staff or sceptre is the emblem of power; the bishop has his pastoral staff, and the magician the enchanted wand with which he rules nature, the elements, and the beings of darkness and infernal creatures. The magic wand is necessary for tracing the circle in which the sorcerer shuts himself to call up spirits, and, in fact, rhabdomancy may be said to form part of every occultistic operation. From the sixteenth century onward, however, the term was more particularly applied, to begin with, to a procedure which we should now call 'prospecting' in mines—that is to say, searching for metalliferous beds or exploring the subsoil in the endeavour to discover springs. This phase of the art deserves a study to itself, in view of the importance now attached to it.

The method is extremely simple. The operator takes a forked stick—at one time

it was commonly said that only hazel-wood would serve, but experience has proved that almost every kind of wood will do for the operation—and holds it with both hands, the angle of the fork foremost. He then walks slowly over the ground it is desired to prospect, and the rod will twist as soon as he passes over underground water or a layer of mineral.

Fig. 293. The Divining-rod in Mines in the Sixteenth Century
Sebastian Münster, *Cosmographia universalis* (Basel, 1544).

There is no doubt that the divining-rod was freely employed in German mines in the sixteenth century, so much so that its use did not cause the least surprise, and appeared to be as natural as the other operations performed in mining centres. Here is a very suggestive woodcut found in Sebastian Münster's *Cosmographia universalis*. It shows a mine in section; the working methods, primitive as they may seem, have hardly been improved to this day (Fig. 293). In the foreground the *Hütman*, or foreman of the mine or foundry, is directing the work of the *Zersetzer*, the man who breaks up the blocks of coal. Farther back the *Seüberer*, or cleaner, is scraping the scattered lumps of coal into a heap, and on the right the *Haüwer*, or miner, is breaking the coal out of the walls of the mine. The *instrumentum tractorium* (hoisting gear) is no other than our winch, still scarcely perfected. To the left a sort of little advance model of the Decauville truck, already running on rails, is carrying the product out of the mine. At the top a prospector wearing, like the

other miners, the pointed hood of a gnome, is trying the ground with the rod, which is unreservedly called "divine"—*virgula divina*—in so great estimation did they hold the help afforded by this invaluable mining instrument. He has just happened

Fig. 294. Exploration of a Mining Area by Means of the Divining-rod in the Sixteenth Century

Georg Agricola, *De Re metallica* (Basel, 1571).

on a lucky deposit of coal—*Glück Rüs*—a very good seam, as we should call it now.

In 1546 Georg Agricola published his celebrated book *De Re metallica* at Basel. This is a treatise on mines and the different branches of metallurgy then known, and in the numerous editions which appeared down to 1571 we find a very vivid

portrayal of the preliminary exploration for a mine (Fig. 294), with the divining-rod playing a most important part. This instrument is being manipulated by two prospectors, while workmen are opening pits under their guidance. A third prospector in the background is cutting young branches from a tree, preparatory to making the rod he will use in his art.

In a book entitled *Bericht vom Bergkwerck*, by S. E. Löhneyss, a German author much less known than the two just mentioned, we find a design (Fig. 295) plainly

Fig. 295. Exploration of a Mining Area by Means of the Divining-rod in the Seventeenth Century

S. E. Löhneyss, *Bericht vom Bergkwerck* (Zellerfeldt, 1617).

imitated from the one in Agricola's book. It shows that the working of mines had not changed at all by the beginning of the seventeenth century. The prospectors are still wearing their hooded costume, and their way of holding the rod is the same.

In view of the foregoing it is difficult to account for the fact that the divining-rod was suddenly acclaimed in France, about the end of the seventeenth century, as a novelty and a wonder, and that so many writers and philosophers embarked on such long discussions about a thing to which nobody gave any thought in Germany. In 1692 a humble Dauphiné peasant, Jacques Aymar, had called attention to the divining-rod, which seems to have been almost unknown in France at that time, except in this province. Not only did Aymar discover water, mines, and hidden treasure, but he was further able to trace robbers and murderers by means of his

rod. His renown caused him to be summoned to Lyons by the Procureur du Roi and the Lieutenant-criminel to help them discover the murderers of a wine-merchant and his wife who had been found in a cellar with their throats cut. "His rod twisted rapidly at the two spots in the cellar where the two corpses had been found," wrote Pierre Garnier, physician of Montpellier, in his *Dissertation physique sur la baguette*, published at Lyons in 1692, the very year of the crime.

> He followed the streets where the murderers had passed, entered the courtyard of the archiepiscopal palace, left the town by the Rhône bridge, and turned to the right along the river. He came into a house where he pointed out a table and three bottles as having been touched by the murderers, and it was certified that this was so by two children who had seen them slink into that house.

Fig. 296. Familiar Demon of a Mine
Olaus Magnus, *Historia de gentibus septentrionalibus* (Rome, 1555).

Aymar followed the trail of the murderers to the camp at Sablon; then he returned to Lyons, and went by boat down the Rhône to Beaucaire. There the rod twisted in front of the prison, and in the prison they found a hunchback who on being questioned confessed that he had taken part in the crime with two accomplices, who had made good their escape and crossed the frontier.

This story made a great stir and called forth many works in which the supposedly novel mode of divination was variously estimated. Some saw in it the plain influence of the Devil, among others the anonymous author of the *Traité en forme de lettre contre la nouvelle rhabdomancie, ou la manière de deviner avec une baguette fourchue* (Lyons, 1694). This opinion was corroborated by the fact that men had believed from time immemorial that the four elements were inhabited by as many kinds of genii known as 'elementals'; salamanders frequented fire, sylphs the air, undines frolicked in water, like those Rhine maidens of Germanic legend who guarded the gold, and, finally, the nether spirits of the mountains, the mines, and the earth were the gnomes or elves, known to the Greeks as *kaballoi* and still called kobolds by the northern peoples. It was believed that these last ruled as masters in the mines, and that their anger sometimes caused those terrible explosions which we now know to be due to fire-damp. Olaus Magnus, in the work I have so often cited, thought it necessary to show one of these demons in his picture of a mine

(Fig. 296). A miner is seen on the left driving his tunnel, and on the right the demon of the mine, busy at the same task but with what intention it is not easy to guess, for one never knows the ridiculous ideas that may spring up in the brain of a demon.

Père Lebrun, of the Oratory, accordingly attributed the powers of the divining-rod also to these demon elementals, in his *Lettres qui découvrent l'illusion des philosophes sur la baguette, et qui détruisent leurs systèmes* (Paris, 1693). Père Malebranche, of the same confraternity, was said to hold the same opinion. Père Ménestrier, who touched rather flightily on every sort of subject, also goes over to the demonist party in his dissertation "Indications de la baguette," which comes at the end of his work *La Philosophie des images énigmatiques* (Lyons, 1694). All these authors refuse to admit any physical cause for the movement of the divining-rod, owing to the fact that this rod may be indifferently of any kind of wood whatever, dry or green; that it is influenced by substances of very varied natures, such as water, metals, blood, or crystal, or even by metaphysical entities with no concrete existence, such as the virtues and vices; and that it is used for ascertaining the quality of fabrics and distinguishing genuine coins from base—all of them things which cannot take place through any one natural effect. Père Lebrun says that

> they have even gone so far as to deal with the boundary-stones of land. The divining-rod indicates them by its movement. If the stones are in the place where they had been put by the owners of the land the rod will twist not only over the stones, but over the intervals between them; whereas if any stone is not in its original position the rod will turn only over this stone and will not turn at all when taken away from it.

In his endeavour to ascertain the diabolical nature of the action Père Ménestrier bases his argument on the established fact that the divining-rod will turn only over water if water is being sought, and only over gold if gold is being sought, and that the influence of the thought of the person manipulating the rod is essential, which would not be the case if a physical cause were in question. "A nobleman who had this gift," he says, "acknowledged that the mental concentration he was obliged to direct on the precise search he wished to carry out fatigued him extremely." He concludes, in short, that

> there are thus uses of the divining-rod which are manifestly diabolical, since God assures us of it, and Himself reveals to us the operations of the rod and the causes of these operations. This is an article of faith which no Christian can deny. Hence I am in a position to say that the power of the divining-rod comes from the Demon.

The authors who assigned a purely physical cause to the movement of the divining-rod were no less numerous. They explained this phenomenon by affirming, on a theory which was not without analogy to recent theories of radio-activity,

the existence of "corpuscles" emanating from the substances sought. Among these opponents of the theologians was M. de Vagny, Procureur du Roi at Grenoble, who in the actual year of Jacques Aymar's adventure published a detailed account of it entitled *Histoire merveilleuse d'un maçon qui, conduit par la baguette divinatoire, a suivi un meurtrier pendant 45 heures sur la terre et plus de 30 heures sur l'eau.* Then there is Pierre Garnier, whose work I have quoted. He too adheres to the theory of corpuscles. "Here is how I think this takes place," says he.

> In every spot where the murderers passed a very great quantity of corpuscles were left which issued, by transpiration, from the bodies of those murderers. As a murderer never acts in cold blood, these corpuscles were otherwise ordered than they were before the murder, and they operated very strongly on Aymar's body, especially upon his skin.

But the most ardent adversary of any diabolical intervention was the Abbé de Vallemont. In his work *La Physique occulte ou traité de la baguette divinatoire*, published at Paris in 1725 and at The Hague in 1762, he gave a complete account of the methods of using the divining-rod then current in Europe.

The first, which seems to be the classical French method, is very well shown in Fig. 297, which we reproduce from the Abbé's work. The author says :

> A forked branch of hazel, or filbert, must be taken, a foot and a half long, as thick as a finger, and not more than a year old, as far as may be. The two limbs (A and B) of the fork are held in the two hands, without gripping too tight, the back of the hand being toward the ground. The point (C) goes foremost, and the rod lies horizontally. Then the diviner walks gently over the places where it is believed there is water, minerals, or hidden money. He must not tread roughly, or he will disperse the cloud of vapours and exhalations which rise from the spot where these things are and which impregnate the rod and cause it to slant.

Fig. 298 shows another way of holding the rod, following a method conceived by a certain Sire Roger. "To find water," says this author, "you must take a forked branch of hazel, alder, oak, or apple about a foot long and as thick as one of your fingers, so that the wind may not easily cause it to stir. You must balance it as exactly as possible on one of your hands ; then walk gently, and when you pass above a watercourse the rod will turn."

A third and quite different method was practised in Germany, according to Père Kircher (Fig. 299). It consisted in taking a

> shoot of hazel quite straight and free from knots, cutting it into two parts of almost equal length, scooping a little hollow in the end of one length, and cutting the other to a point so that the end of one part may fit into the end of the other. The diviner will then carry the shoot thus joined before him, holding it between the two forefingers as the figure shows. When he passes over springs of water or metalliferous veins these two wands will move and bend.

We saw by the works of Agricola and Löhneyss, however, that the ordinary method was also practised in Germany.

In conclusion a fourth style (Fig. 300) is described by the Abbé de Vallemont, who states that he has not seen it employed

> except by a few people who make a trade of seeking for water. They take a long shoot of hazel, or of any other wood, quite smooth and straight like an ordinary walking-stick;

Fig. 297. French Method of Rhabdomancy
Abbé de Vallemont, *La Physique occulte* (The Hague, 1762).
Author's collection.

Fig. 298. Sire Roger's Method
Abbé de Vallemont, *La Physique occulte* (The Hague, 1762).
Author's collection.

Fig. 299. Père Kircher's Method
Abbé de Vallemont, *La Physique occulte* (The Hague, 1762).
Author's collection.

> they hold the two ends of it in their hands, bending it a little and carrying it horizontally, and then the moment they pass above a spring of water the stick twists and the curve turns toward the ground.

The Abbé de Vallemont explained this phenomenon by the existence of invisible corpuscles which escaped from the substances under investigation. "I say" (these are his own words) "that the corpuscles—as well those which transpire from the hands of the man into the rod, as those which rise in vapour above springs of water, in exhalations above minerals, or in columns of corpuscles from the insensible transpiration over the footsteps of fugitive criminals—are the immediate effective

cause of the movement and bending of the divining-rod." And here is the curious figure by which he thought to explain his theory (Fig. 301).

Jacques Aymar had many emulators. Père Lebrun mentions a Président of the Grenoble Parlement,

> as respectable for his probity, his intellect, and his learning as for his offices and his titles, who declared that the rod had many times twisted in his hands over springs. An opportunity occurred a few days later of making the experiment at Villart, near Tencin, one of

Fig. 300. A Little-used Method
Abbé de Vallemont, *La Physique occulte*.
Author's collection.

Fig. 301. Explanation of the Divining-rod
Abbé de Vallemont, *La Physique occulte*.
Author's collection.

> his estates. I held his right hand with both mine, and another person held his left, in a garden walk under which there was a leaden pipe which carried water into a pond. Instantly the forked rod which he was holding between his hands with its point turned toward the earth sprang upright and twisted so violently that Monsieur le Président begged for quarter because it had hurt his fingers.

The same author speaks of a person who practised at the same time as Jacques Aymar and made the rod twist in the presence of the celebrated Père Mabillon. There were also a certain Sieur Expié and the daughter of a merchant named Martin at Lyons. A century later Bletton repeated Aymar's experiments in Paris, and was countenanced by a member of the Munich Academy, Dr Ritter, who attributed the

power of the rod to a phenomenon analogous to galvanism, which was then in fashion. Another hydroscopist, a Tyrolean named Campetti, was the first to replace the divining-rod with a little pendulum composed of a fragment of pyrites suspended by a thread ; this is still frequently employed.

Although the action of the divining-rod is not yet clearly explained, it has now entered the domain of science. Psychology congresses have investigated it ; I myself have seen it twist in my hands several times, and although it still retains all its mystery it has lost the character of the marvellous which it formerly possessed. Sorcerers are numerous nowadays, and they, rather than engineers holding diplomas, are applied to when country folk want to dig a well with certainty and at the least possible cost.

X

THE MYSTERY OF SLEEP AND CLAIRVOYANCE

IF men in their waking state have aspired to penetrate the secrets of the future and learn hidden things by all those mechanical processes which I have enumerated in the preceding pages, what divinatory value must they not have attributed in all ages to sleep—that mysterious and inexplicable state where the ties which fasten the body to the thinking part of the individual seem to loosen and stretch, and where the doors of a new, unknown, and unexplored world open to the mind, the world of fantastic and unreal beings in which we pass a third of our existence !

It is during sleep that even the most practical and positive of men, the one most opposed to useless reverie and the fantasies of the imagination, becomes a dreamer in spite of himself, receives the visits of the gods, views phantoms and spectres whose existence he denies, and penetrates the secrets of the future.

It is needless to recall the important part played by dreams in classical antiquity. Among the Greeks, the Persians, the Romans, and the barbarians there was no famous personage, no warrior, pontiff, emperor, or philosopher whose life was not diversified with some fortunate or unfortunate dream, the interpretation of which exerted a decisive effect upon his existence. Dreams were accepted by all as sacred warnings, as celestial admonitions which one dared not scorn under pain of committing sacrilege. Dreams have convulsed human lives, ravaged empires, decided the fate of peoples. The prophetic worth of dreams was held in as high reverence as the oracle from the tripod of the sibyl, and every poet of antiquity—Homer, Virgil, Lucan—knew how to take full advantage of all the circumstances of the divinatory dream and the tragic shudder which shook man when he felt himself, in his own despite, suddenly draw near the world of the hereafter.

The Christian religion itself, which should certainly have desired to arraign the oneiromancy of superstitious custom, was the first to encourage it by sanctioning the divine character of the Biblical tales in which patriarchs and prophets unveiled the future by interpreting dreams. Theology was caught in its own snare. It was difficult to proffer Christians, for their edification, the lives of personages regarded as saints and to tell them in the same breath, " Do not imitate them ! " Christians did imitate them, and divination by dreams was all the more practised as dreams were involuntary, in contrast to other methods of divination which required the

preparation of some mechanical medium. In vain did the theologians warn Christians that many a dream came from the Devil—" adversarius vester diabolus," said they at compline, " qui tanquam leo rugiens circuit quærens quem devoret " [1]; in vain did they put them on their guard against the " phantasms of the night," *noctium phantasmata*; it was enough that dreams might have come from God for every one to imagine that his in truth did so. When Jacob saw the mysterious ladder in his dream he did not doubt for a moment that he was receiving this sign from God and not from the Devil. The prophet Daniel revealed the future awaiting Nebuchadnezzar by explaining to him his dream of a statue with a golden head and feet of clay. The patriarch Joseph, who even in Egypt, the supreme land of magic, was famed for his interpretative knowledge of dreams, was twice called on to give proof of his wisdom.

Everybody knows the story of these two incidents contained in Genesis, chapter xl. Joseph, being in prison by the order of his master, Potiphar, there meets with the chief butler and the chief baker of Pharaoh, who had each had a dream. He foretold to the one that he would be restored to his office near the King and to the other that he would be put to death, and it happened as he foretold. Two years afterward Pharaoh himself had a dream. He saw seven fat cows grazing on the bank of the Nile, and seven lean cows came up out of the river and devoured them. Then in a second dream he saw seven ears of corn, " full and good," which were devoured by seven thin and withered ears. The chief butler remembered Joseph, had him taken out of prison, and presented him before Pharaoh so that he might interpret the two dreams to him, which he did at once. The seven fat cows and the seven full ears betokened, he said, seven years of plenty, and the seven lean cows and the seven withered ears betokened seven years of famine and want which would follow them. He counselled Pharaoh to have great store of food gathered together during the seven abundant years, and this saved Egypt from the famine which came after.

This last scene was often treated, in the most exquisitely artless manner, by the miniaturists of the Middle Ages and the primitive painters. Fig. 302 shows a fine woodcut taken from Schedel's *Nuremberg Chronicle*. In accordance with the tradition followed by artists of the time, Pharaoh's palace is a fifteenth-century interior easily recognizable as that splendid Audienzsaal of Nuremberg Castle with the ceiling decorated by Lucas Cranach and amply lit by vast pillared windows looking down on the town and showing a boundless skyscape. Pharaoh " Mephres " is dressed like a Hohenstaufen or Capetian of the twelfth century; Potiphar is seated with his back to the town; Joseph stands upright, interpreting the dream, while Potiphar's wife, in a headdress of the period and girdled gown, pulls his cloak from

[1] " Your enemy the Devil, that as a roaring lion goeth about seeking whom he may devour."

behind. Among so many others we need not complain of this slight anachronism of two years, which combines two Biblical episodes in one.

There were famous dreams, like that of Marie de Médicis, who dreamed that Henri IV was assassinated on the very eve of the day the event took place. In his *Remarques sur plusieurs songes de personnes de qualité* (Amsterdam, 1690) Louis Guyon recounts that Henri III, " three days before being killed at Saint-Cloud by Jacques

Fig. 302. Joseph interpreting Pharaoh's Dream
Schedel, *Nuremberg Chronicle* (1493).

Clément the Jacoppin [Jacobin or Dominican] the first day of August 1589, had seen while dreaming all the royal ornaments, such as sandals, tunics, dalmatics, the mantle of azure satin, the sceptre, and the Hand of Justice, all bloody and trampled underfoot by monks." Louis de Bourbon, Prince de Condé, who was killed at the battle of Jarnac in the time of Charles IX, dreamed of his death the night before, and many other well-known instances occur to confirm the prophetic and divinatory value of dreams. Mention is even made of learned men who solved problems while sleeping or read books belonging to distant libraries which they had never visited. Persons have sometimes received dream warnings expressed in foreign languages which they did not understand at all, and, the words being remembered and translated, it has been found that their sense applied perfectly to the solution of some uncertainty upon which the dreamer desired enlightenment.

Methods of interpreting dreams have been put forward time out of mind. The method of Artemidorus, a Greek author of the end of the first century, is one of the most ancient. The one which forms the basis of all our modern 'dream books' is taken from a work by Jean Tibault, a Lyons astrologer, entitled *La Physionomie des songes et visions fantastiques des personnes* (Lyons, 1530). The items are arranged in alphabetical order, and the book contains about four hundred phrases like the following, most of them having acquired the standing of proverbial sayings :

Felled trees mean harm.
To dream that you are a tree means illness.
To worship God means joy.
To be shaved means troubles.
To have a long beard means strength or profit.
To have a beautiful arm means sadness.
To have withered arms is a very bad sign.
To have crucified Jesus Christ means illness.
To drink clear water means pleasure.
To drink stinking water means bad illness.
To grind or purloin pepper means melancholy.
New shoes mean consolation.
Old shoes mean sadness.
To see a lighted candle means anger or quarrels.
To hear bells ring means slander.
To cut bacon means the death of some one.
To cut barley-bread means to be molested.
To gather grapes means harm.
To give a ring means harm.
To give a knife means wickedness.
To see a dragon means profit.
To write on paper means some accusation.
To see the moon fall from the sky means illness.
To eat cheese means profit.
To eat roots means agreement.
To hear a raven croak means sadness.
To see a donkey means malice.
To see a monk means bad luck.

There are many other oneirocritical works, such as that by Achmet Apomazar, an Arab author of the ninth century, which was translated into French by Denys Duval ; the *Oneirocrite musulman*, translated by Pierre Vattier in 1664 ; *Le Palais des princes du sommeil* (Bourges, 1667), by Célestin de Mirbel, and so on. Their interpretations differ considerably, and those who wish to devote themselves to interpreting their own dreams or those of others would do well to procure these various works and make comparisons.

The importance attached to dreams has led men to stimulate them artificially. Jerome Cardan speaks of the ointment *populeum*, made with the sap of the leaves and branches of poplars ; this produces an abundance of fortunate dreams. Pierre Mora, in his book *Zekerboni*, manuscript No. 2790 in the Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, gives the following recipe " for youths who wish to know by a dream the woman they will marry " :

> They must have powdered coral and some fine powdered lodestone, which they shall mix together and dilute with the blood of a white pigeon, and they shall make a dough of it, which they shall enclose in a large fig after having wrapped it in blue taffeta ; they shall hang this round their neck, and when they go to bed shall put the pentacle for Saturday under their bolster, saying a special prayer the while.

Fig. 303. Somnific Witchcraft
Guaccius, *Compendium maleficarum* (Milan, 1626).

But sleep was the occasion of events far more mysterious even than dreams, which are phenomena common to all men, to a greater or less extent. There were persons subject to fits of somnambulism, who got up and walked about in their sleep. These must have caused profound astonishment in those former ages when the idea of the supernatural was the directive principle of every human action, and it is a matter for some small surprise to see Jerome Cardan, in his *De Subtilitate*, liber xviii, calling them simply, without any comment, " eos qui ob turbulenta surgunt somnia." [1] Then there was that kind of artificial, induced sleep which about the seventeenth century began to be distinguished as " somnific witchcraft " ; it was no other than one form of the phenomena now called hypnotism and magnetism.

Père Guaccius—whose inexhaustible work has so often been put under contribution—comes to our aid again here with a pretty woodcut from his chapter " De Maleficio somnifico " (Fig. 303). It shows three gossips, one of whom is a witch, occupied in making passes over a woman asleep on a bed. It certainly seems that we have here one of the exercises in magnetism very well described by the Baron du Potet in his *Manuel de l'étudiant magnétiseur* (Paris, 1846). He says :

> Taking up a position a foot away from the sleeping person whom I wish to affect, I pass my hands over the whole surface of the body in succession ; discontinuing these

[1] " Those who get up from bed on account of disturbing dreams."

> movements, or passes, after about five or ten minutes, I then approach a finger to some part of the surface, either naked or covered, and without contact bring about slight muscular contractions in it.

This description gives us the exact gesture of the magnetizer represented by Père Guaccius.

It is certain that hypnotism must have played an important part in the mysterious phenomena which were the wonder of mankind in antiquity ; the divinatory power acquired by the individual in a state of hypnosis is too valuable an auxiliary to occultists to have been neglected by them. Some pythonesses were perhaps hypnotized before prophesying, but the documents we possess are too vague to permit any definite assertions. A chapter entitled " De la Fascination et de son artifice " in Cornelius Agrippa's *Philosophie occulte*, Book I, chapter l, leads us to believe that he had remarked the existence of the kind of person with certain passive faculties to-day known as a ' medium,' but his description is so confused that it is very difficult to form any clear conception from it. " Fascination," he says,

> is a binding or charm which passes from the mind of the sorcerer through the eyes and to the heart of the one he is bewitching, and sorcery is an instrument of the mind—namely, a pure, shining, subtle vapour proceeding from the purest blood engendered by the heat of the heart, which does continually send rays of a like nature through the eyes. You must know, therefore, that men grow bewitched when they look continuously straight into the eyes of another and that the eyes of the two then fasten themselves strongly to one another, and light of eye also to light of eye ; mind then joining to mind and carrying flashes to it and fixing them upon it.

All that we can for certain glean from this passage is that the dynamism of the eye was very well known, whether to the extent of inducing hypnosis, or artificial sleep, or exercised merely as a sort of enchanting effect which partly annihilated the will and produced what was formerly called a spell or enchantment.

Apart from this, hypnosis—among male and female diviners—was mostly of a cataleptic nature, and was induced by staring fixedly at some object. This produced ' trance,' a sort of ecstatic condition in which the subject, more or less losing consciousness of his surroundings, sees with a clearer inner sight endowed with actual prophetic qualities. This phenomenon is turned to profit in consulting magic mirrors, a subject already dealt with, and also by cartomancers, some of whom have themselves hypnotized as a means of delivering their oracles, whereas the majority are content to gaze attentively at the cards of the tarot until the external world seems to vanish, and they enter a state known as clairvoyance, which has the effect of increasing their clearness of vision.

XI

CURATIVE VIRTUES OF THE INVISIBLE FORCES

HERE one is quite naturally led to speak of a class of phenomena which have had great importance at all times and have provoked controversies which are still nowhere near being concluded ; I refer to miraculous healings.

On this point we find the theologians in opposition to the demonists. If cures have taken place at Lourdes or any other sanctuary consecrated by the Church they are the undeniable work of the Deity. But similar cures have also taken place in circumstances where the disapproval of the Church has been clearly shown ; these cures, according to the Church, are the work of the Devil. Hence the Devil holds in his hands curative powers equal to those of God, and, as persons who are cured ask for nothing more, they are profiting by a precious diabolic benefit which they would doubtless be very wrong in refusing. This is a weighty question which I do not undertake to decide.

The fact remains that one of the greatest manifestations of this sort took place during the eighteenth century in the heart of Jansenism—a doctrine mercilessly condemned by the Church. The adepts of this doctrine supplicated God, and He freely poured out favours upon them which He seemed to deny to the faithful who remained subject to the Papal obedience. The Papal adherent asserted that the cures in question were the work of the Devil. However that may be, they resembled at every point those which might have been obtained by a *novena* of prayers addressed to some accepted saint.

The history of Jansenism and of the miraculous events it gave birth to lives in every one's memory, but the precious engravings preserved for us in Louis Basile Carré de Montgeron's beautiful work, *La Vérité des miracles du Diacre Pâris*, are not so well known. Deacon Pâris was a personage who had led an exemplary life, but was strongly attached to Jansenist principles. He died at Paris, in the Faubourg Saint-Marcel, and his body was buried in the cemetery of Saint-Médard, on the site of the square now surrounding the church of the same name, at the bottom of the Rue Mouffetard. His tomb soon became a place of pilgrimage for Jansenists, and there many persons had ecstasies, went into trances, and indulged in nervous movements smacking of the inspired dance, or *saltatio*, of the ancients, which caused them to be given the significant name of 'Convulsionists.' Furthermore, many cures were

effected there, principally of nervous ailments, blindness, amaurosis, paralysis, and such. The tomb was besieged by a throng of people striving to get near enough to touch it, which was sometimes very difficult. Here is Carré de Montgeron's faithful representation of the scene (Fig. 304). Two women are monopolizing the tomb, lying upon it to be healed. Other persons have crawled underneath it, in

Fig. 304. The Tomb of Deacon Pâris in the Cemetery of Saint-Médard
Carré de Montgeron, *La Vérité des miracles du Diacre Pâris* (Paris, 1737).

the narrow gap between the ground and the tombstone. A paralytic is being brought up on the right. Priests are reading prayers, and behind the tomb in the middle distance three personages with the appearance of magistrates stand unmoved, preserving an inflexible dignity. All round an enthusiastic crowd obstructs the approach to the tomb, which a Swiss guard, armed with his halberd, is not succeeding in keeping clear.

Cures were of frequent, almost daily occurrence. Carré de Montgeron has given a most minutely detailed account of them, embellished with numerous very suggestive engravings. Only two are reproduced—those relating to the extraordinary cure of Mlle Coirin, who is first shown lying on her bed (Fig. 305), paralysed in one

Fig. 305. A WOMAN MIRACULOUSLY HEALED BY DEACON PÂRIS: BEFORE THE CURE
Carré de Montgeron, *La Vérité des miracles du Diacre Pâris.*

leg and suffering from cancer of the breast. On a wall in the background the artist has symbolized the two ailments she is suffering from by depicting a breast and a withered leg within a frame. Then we have the sufferer suddenly cured (Fig. 306). By way of thanksgiving she has seated herself at her toilet-table, and the dying woman of yesterday has changed into a coquette renewing life whose mirror tells her that she will once more know the joys of this world.

The eighteenth century, so remarkable for a flood of scepticism without precedent in history, was also the century when the marvellous had greatest success. Forty years after the cemetery of Saint-Médard was closed by order of the King all Europe was filing past Mesmer's magnetic tub.

The inventor of this apparatus was a very distinguished German physician. He had been inspired by the ideas of Van Helmont, Goclenius, Burggraeve, and Nicolas de Locques, and most of all by William Maxwell's treatise *De Medicina magnetica*, published at Frankfort in 1679.

This book contains aphorisms like the following:

> Material rays flow from all bodies in which the soul operates by its presence. By these rays energy and the power of working are diffused. The vital spirit which descends from the sky, pure, unchanged, and whole, is the parent of the vital spirit which exists in all things. If you make use of the universal spirit by means of instruments impregnated with this spirit you will thereby call to your aid the great secret of the mages. The universal medicine is nothing but the vital spirit repeated in the proper subject.

After having conducted investigations upon magnetism and its influence in nervous disorders Mesmer became aware that an invisible force, analogous to that by which the magnet attracts iron, existed in everything; Maxwell had taught this, and had called the two forces by the same name, *magnes*. Mesmer then published, in 1779, his famous *Mémoire sur la découverte du magnétisme animal*, which opened with this proposition: "A mutual influence subsists between the celestial bodies, the earth, and living bodies." Afterward he opened a consulting-room in Paris, and installed the famous "magnetic tub"; one of the best pictures of the time showing this is reproduced in Fig. 307. It is a popular print entitled *Le Baquet de Monsieur Mesmer, ou représentation fidèle des opérations du magnétisme animal*. The accompanying legend gives an excellent description of the contrivance, and runs thus:

> M. Mesmer, Doctor of Medicine of the Faculty of Vienna, in Austria, is the sole discoverer of animal magnetism. This method of curing a multitude of ailments—Hydropsy, Paralysis, Gout, Scurvy, Blindness, and accidental Deafness among others—consists in the application of a fluid or agent which M. Mesmer directs upon those who resort to him, sometimes with one of his fingers and sometimes with an iron rod held by another and pointed as he chooses. He also employs a tub furnished with attached cords,

Fig. 306. A Woman miraculously healed by Deacon Pâris: After the Cure
Carré de Montgeron, *La Vérité des miracles du Diacre Pâris.*

which the Sick Persons tie round themselves, and with bent-iron bars, which they approach to the pit of their Stomach, their Liver, or their Spleen, or, in general, to any part of their body in which they suffer. The Sick Persons, especially the Females, go into convulsions or fits which bring about their cure. The Magnetizers (they are those to whom M. Mesmer has revealed his secret, and are more than a hundred in number, among them counting the first Nobles of the Court) place their hands upon the part affected and rub it for some time; this operation hastens the effect of the cords and irons. Every other day there is

Fig. 307. Mesmer's Magnetic Tub
Popular print.
Bibliothèque Nationale (De Vinck Collection, No. 900).

a Tub for the poor; in the Antechamber Musicians play airs calculated to induce gaiety in the Sick Persons. Men and women of every age and every degree are seen arriving in crowds at this celebrated Physician's house—the Soldier with his badges of honour, the Lawyer, the Monk, the Man of Letters, the blue-ribbon Cook, the Artisan, the Physician, the Surgeon. It is a spectacle truly worthy of feeling souls to see men distinguished by birth or social rank magnetizing, with tender solicitude, Children, Aged Persons, and, above all, the Necessitous. As for M. Mesmer, he breathes an air of beneficence in all his discourse; he is grave and speaks little. His head seems always filled with great thoughts.

We see that the tub was a covered vat, oval in shape, round which the sick were seated. Mesmer stands holding a little wand. On the left a magnetizer is making

'passes' over a sufferer. After some moments the invalids would let go the rods and touch one another's finger-tips, thus forming what was called "the chain." Some would then go into a trance or fit, as we read above, and this was the moment when the cures took place. The trances were sometimes so violent that the sufferers had to be carried out, as shown in the English engraving reproduced (Fig. 308).

As to the internal construction of the tub, Mesmer made no secret of this, revealing it in his *Aphorismes de Monsieur Mesmer dictés à l'assemblée de ses élèves* (Paris, 1785). I have reproduced his description in full in my *Anthologie de l'Occultisme*, and need only recall that the vat was filled with bottles laid round the sides, all containing water magnetized as far as possible by the same person. These bottles converged on a central bottle, which stood upright. The vat was filled with a certain depth of water. "One may add to it," said Mesmer, "iron filings, powdered glass, and other such bodies, about which I have various opinions."

Fig. 308. Mesmer's Magnetic Tub
Drawing by Sergent, engraved by Toyng.
Bibliothèque Nationale (De Vinck Collection, No. 899).

Mesmer's tub gave rise to impassioned controversies. His adherents saw in it the action of a novel natural fluid related to electricity, then much in fashion on account of the constant discoveries connected with it; his scientific detractors saw only quackery; and, finally, a great many theologians—among them the vindictive Abbé Fiard—saw only the work of the Devil. The strange caricature here reproduced (Fig. 309) was published in 1785 under the inspiration of this last opinion. It followed upon a very biased examination of magnetism which had just been carried out by a scientific commission, and a glance at it would lead one to imagine that Mesmer's doctrine was definitely refuted. A demon is flying away with Mesmer himself above the tub, others are mobbing an archbishop and a monk. A Court jester is tearing up a copy of the *Précis historique des faits relatifs au magnétisme animal*, which had been published in London in 1781. And, in the uncertainty surrounding the subject of the active force of his famous tub, this is how Mesmer came to be regarded as a sort of magician whose doctrine, skirting both official science and occultism, has been acclaimed and rejected, turn and turn about, by both of them, without anyone being able to arrive at the truth.

Among miraculous cures we must also reckon those performed a century earlier —about 1657—by the celebrated Sir Kenelm Digby with what was called "the sympathetic powder."

This English gentleman, a son of the Sir Everard Digby who was hanged, drawn, and quartered in London for his complicity in Guy Fawkes' Gunpowder Plot, was banished from England and spent most of his life in France. He devoted himself to the natural sciences, became intimate with Descartes, and at Florence made the

Fig. 309. Mesmerism by all the Devils
Eighteenth-century caricature.
Author's collection.

acquaintance of a Carmelite monk who had visited the Indies, Persia, and China itself, and brought thence a method by which he worked marvellous cures. This method he communicated to Digby. It consisted in healing wounds—especially those caused by firearms—not by dressing them with salves direct, but merely by applying the salves to pieces of linen saturated with blood which had issued from the wounds. The salves were compounded with sulphuric acid powder, which was called sympathetic powder from the sympathetic action thus set up at a distance between the blood of the injured person and the wound from which it had issued. This process became the rage in France. Mme de Sévigné mentions it in one of her letters, and the whole French Court took an interest in it.

Digby delivered a discourse before a gathering of learned men at the Faculty of Montpellier in which he expounded his theoretic principles as well as his formulas

for practical application; and this system, by which, as he said, "wounds were salved without need of touching or seeing them," aroused great enthusiasm. It was published at Paris in 1658 under the title of *Discours faict en une célèbre assemblée par le Chevalier Digby, chancelier de la Reine de la Grande-Bretagne, touschant la guérison des playes par la poudre de sympathie*. We read in this book that James Howell, "secretary to the Duke of Bouquaingan [Buckingham]," had been wounded very dangerously in the hand and that he sent for Digby to treat it.

"I asked him," Digby says,

> for some piece of stuff or linen on which there was blood from his wounds. He sent straight to fetch the garter which had served as a first bandage, and while this was doing I asked him for a basin of water, as if I desired to wash my hands, and I took a handful of vitriol powder which I had in a casket on a table and quickly dissolved it in the water. As soon as the garter was brought me I put it in the basin, closely remarking what Master Howell did the while. He was talking with a gentleman in a corner of his chamber and giving no heed to what I did, and suddenly he trembled and made a movement as if he felt some great stirring within him. "I know not," said he, "what ails me, but I know well that I feel no more pain. It seems to me that a pleasant freshness, as it were of a damp cool napkin, is spreading over my hand, the which has taken from me all the inflammation that I felt." In five or six days the wound was cicatrized and wholly healed.

In this case, therefore, we seem to be concerned with a kind of beneficent spell; action at a distance is experienced in the same manner as in the death-spell. Furthermore, the blood from the wound of the injured person is considered as being a still living part of him, a theory quite in conformity with that of vital spirits—much in fashion in the seventeenth century—and also with the most ancient rabbinical opinions, which placed the breath or spirit of life in the blood. In affecting a separate portion of the injured person's blood the operator was convinced that he affected the whole equally, and this effect accorded with all the most celebrated occultist theories, from Arnauld de Villeneuve to Cornelius Agrippa and Paracelsus.

XII

TALISMANS

THE talisman is another of those mysterious forces against which the most formidable and strongly tempered weapons of philosophy have shattered themselves.

The Christian religion sounded its thunders in vain; itself it submitted to the common law, and opposed its own talismans to those it condemned. For all they are marked with the divine seal, crucifixes, rosaries, miraculous medals, and St Benedict medals are none the less in the phylacteral tradition which distinguishes all talismans. Man released from the talisman does not exist, in a manner of speaking. The most rationalistic scholar, who believes himself clear of all prejudices and superstitions, will freely admit that he carries some mascot or other in a secret pocket of his garments; a coin, perhaps, or some little trinket in which he places no trust, but with which he will not part out of habit, although he may be the first to laugh at himself on this account.

The gods are dead, but talismans remain. They have survived all forms of incredulity and in doing it revealed their own eternal vitality. The man whose only faith is in the speed of his motor-car or aeroplane, and who marches on death as toward a black chasm in which he will be engulfed and every last shred of his personality destroyed for ever, hangs a doll on his vehicle as the patriarchs of Israel or Assur hung teraphim on the skins covering their tents. Times have changed in nothing, appearances to the contrary notwithstanding. This is a kind of benign sorcery to which each one abandons himself, even though his mental culture has demonstrated the absurdity of it to him. So does humanity show its weakness and the talisman its strength, and its occult power is manifested in the fact that men have not been able to get free of it.

Talismans are found among all peoples in all periods of history; no occult formula is more universal. When excavations are made in Egypt, Chaldea, Persia, Greece, or Rome the first objects found are talismans. Certain Egyptian papyri give the details of ceremonies for preparing the 'Ring of Hermes' and scarabs. Ancient authors have preserved the descriptions of a considerable number of talismans, of which it is impossible to give even an abridged enumeration.

There were talismans of all sorts—rings, jewels, engraved and sculptured stones, inscribed pieces of parchment and paper, worn on the person or hung up in houses,

to which magic properties were attributed. The priapic image of gardens was only a fixed talisman intended to drive away maleficent powers and protect the crops from all depredation. Sometimes, even, the talisman might be a living animal—cat, snake, lizard, chameleon—of which the greatest possible care was taken ; black cats especially had a talismanic repute for bringing good luck, which they have always retained.

Talismans may be summarily divided into maleficent and beneficent. Maleficent talismans are offensive and intended to produce harm. We have seen the use of them in the chapters on sorcery and the evocation of demons. Beneficent talismans are essentially defensive ; their end is the protection of the individual against evil forces and the attraction of beneficent forces. The majority of talismans still employed belong to this latter category.

It is difficult to discover any general method which governed the preparation of talismans. Every religious doctrine, every belief, every theory of natural phenomena has produced its own amulets, which are sometimes commingled to such an extent that it is almost impossible to ascertain their separate origins. The greater part of Greek and Roman talismans have an astrological character, while the Jewish religion and the Cabbala again suggested an immense number of amulets, so much so that it is not unusual to find these elements intimately fused in our own civilization.

Precious stones have been regarded as natural talismans by all peoples. Their hardness and density show that they were formed by extremely powerful forces of affinity and cohesion. They represent matter in its highest state of coagulation and compression ; consequently the radio-active influences which they emit must be considerable. Hence we must not be surprised to see ancient writers—Aristotle, Theophrastus, St Isidore of Seville, Bishop Marbode, St Hildegard, Carlo Dolci, Camille Léonard, Pierre de Scudalupis, Boëtius de Boot, and many more—assigning a special curative virtue to every precious stone. The Christians accepted with enthusiasm every pagan tradition relating to their use, incited by the importance accorded them by the Bible in its description of the High Priest's vestments.

According to Camille Léonard, in his *Speculum lapidum* (Paris, 1610), the emerald, worn on the person, bridles lasciviousness, dispels demoniacal illusions, strengthens the memory, and inspires rhetoricians with convincing arguments. Rubies and carbuncles maintain the body in good health, preserve from plague and poison, increase the gifts of fortune, and reconcile persons antagonized by lawsuits. The sapphire produces peacefulness, amiability, and piety ; it is also useful against the bite of scorpions and serpents, according to Jerome Cardan in *De Subtilitate* (Paris, 1550). St Hildegard—*Physica*, "De Lapidibus," xvii—says that the diamond,

held in the mouth by liars and men subject to anger, cures these faults, and it enables those who cannot endure abstinence to fast easily ; the topaz neutralizes any liquid in which poison is present, and the pearl is a sovereign remedy against headaches.

Precious stones are still more active if they are employed according to their astrological affinities and combined with metals of the same nature. Here is a table of the affinities of the seven planets with the seven principal metals and precious stones, as given by Pierre de Scudalupis, *Sympathia septem metallorum* (Paris, 1610), and Tritheim, *Veterum Sophorum Sigilla* (1612) :

PLANETS	*METALS*	*PRECIOUS STONES*
The Moon	Silver	Crystal
Mercury	Mercury	Lodestone, alectoria
Venus	Copper	Amethyst, pearl, sapphire, carbuncle
The Sun	Gold	Sapphire, diamond, lodestone, jacinth
Mars	Iron	Emerald, jasper
Jupiter	Tin	Cornelian, emerald
Saturn	Lead	Turquoise and all the black stones

The power of the various combinations was still further increased by engraving on the stones or metals symbolic characters proper to their nature, and here we have, besides, the true talisman, which does not fulfil itself without some mysterious mark which determines its value. In his *Traité des Talismans* (Paris, 1671) Pierre de Bresche defines a talisman thus :

> A talisman is nothing else than the seal, figure, character, or image of a celestial omen, planet, or constellation; impressed, engraved, or sculptured upon a sympathetic stone or upon a metal corresponding to the planet; by a workman whose mind is settled and fixed upon his work and the end of his work without being distracted or dissipated in other unrelated thoughts; on the day and at the hour of the planet; in a fortunate place; during fair, calm weather, and when the planet is in the best aspect that may be in the heavens, the more strongly to attract the influences proper to an effect depending upon the power of the same and on the virtues of its influences.

So we must further distinguish here between the ' magnetized ' and unmagnetized talisman. No doubt the first, on which a person skilled in this sort of work has concentrated all his will, should be endowed with properties which the second cannot have.

It is in accordance with the foregoing that we find seven talismans for the seven days of the week (Fig. 310) advocated in the *Secrets merveilleux de la magie naturelle et cabalistique du Petit Albert*, a popular book attributed to Albertus Magnus

These talismans must be engraved on the metals corresponding to the days—that is, the talisman for Sunday, or the Sun, on gold ; for Monday on silver ; for Tuesday on iron ; for Wednesday on fixed or congealed mercury ; for Thursday on tin ; for Friday on copper ; and for Saturday on lead. This is what the book calls—wrongly, by the way—the " talisman of Paracelsus." One of these seven badges must be worn on the person and changed every day. The eighth figure is that of a talisman

Fig. 310. Talismans for the Seven Days of the Week
Secrets merveilleux de la magie naturelle et cabalistique du Petit Albert (Cologne, 1722).

which has no particular attribution and may be worn indifferently on any day ; it ensures triumph over foes, as shown by the verse it bears round the circumference : " Super aspidem et basiliscum ambulabis et conculcabis " (" Thou shalt tread upon the asp and the basilisk, and shalt trample them under thy feet ").

Purely astrological talismans like the foregoing are rare. As I have said, they were freely coupled with Biblical verses, Hebrew divine names, and formulas borrowed from the Cabbala. We know that one of the most famous talismans is that called Solomon's Seal, of which the Hebrew monarch was said to be the originator. It is composed of two interlaced equilateral triangles, one of which stands on its base and the other on its apex ; six points are thus produced which are

set, hexagon fashion, in a circle. Tetragrammaton, the divine name in four letters, must be placed in the middle. The Jews now have an additional talisman which they call Shaddai; it is worn by all Jewish children during the ceremony known as Barmitzva. It is a round metal badge inscribed with the divine name שדי (Shaddai), and its use is of immemorial tradition. Christian Cabbalists and magian sorcerers did not fail to obtain possession of it. Examples of the Shaddai are found in many copies of the *Clavicule de Salomon*, among them the fine pentacle shown in Fig. 311. In a circle the face of the Almighty is seen drawn in a primitive style which is nevertheless very impressive. Solomon's Seal is at the top, and round the circumference runs the inscription, "Ecce faciem et figuram ejus per quem omnia facta sunt, et cui omnes obediunt creaturæ" ("Behold the face and figure of Him by Whom all things were made and Whom all obey"). To the right and left of the countenance are the divine names Al and Shaddai in cursive Hebrew. This talisman is put forward as of universal efficacy, and is thus described in the manuscript: "The Face of the Almighty Saday, the sight and appearance of which all creatures obey and the kneeling angelic spirits worship."

Fig. 311. The Countenance of Shaddai
La Clavicule de Salomon, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, manuscript No. 2348.

The Würzburg Museum possesses an amulet rudely drawn on parchment, of which I give an exact reproduction (Fig. 312); this also shows relationship with talismans of Hebrew origin. It consists of a Solomon's Seal unevenly drawn, accompanied by six characters the meaning of which it is difficult to make out. This amulet was taken at half-past seven in the morning, on February 9, 1749, from the body of Anselm, Bishop of Würzburg and Count of Ingelheim, an ardent adept in alchemy, who was found dead in his bed.

Fig. 312. Amulet found on the Body of Bishop Anselm of Würzburg
Würzburg Museum.

There are many talismans of this sort, but designed for a special purpose. Some

of them are so useful that if they were generally employed they would ensure the happiness of humanity, so I shall not deny my readers the joy of owning them. For instance, if you should unluckily be thrown into prison be sure to have upon you the talisman, shown in Fig. 313, taken from a manuscript in the Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal entitled *Les vrais Talismans, pentacles, et cercles*, for you would then be miraculously set free on the Sunday following, as the inscription annexed to the talisman promises: "If anyone is by chance imprisoned and held chained with iron chains, by the presence of this pentacle engraved on gold, at the day and times of the Sun, he will straight be delivered and set at liberty." The talisman contains various Hebrew letters, too worn to be legible, arranged on a Maltese cross, which is surrounded by this entirely appropriate extract from Psalm cxvi, 16, 17, "Dirupisti vincula mea: tibi sacrificabo hostiam laudis, et nomen Domini invocabo" ("Thou hast loosed my bonds. I will offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and will call upon the name of the Lord").

Fig. 313. Talisman for Deliverance from Prison

Les vrais Talismans, pentacles, et cercles. Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, manuscript No. 2497. Eighteenth century.

Fig. 314. Talisman for Resisting the Attacks of Evildoers

La Clavicule de Salomon. Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, manuscript No. 2348. Eighteenth century.

Fig. 314 shows a talisman taken from the *Livre de la Clavicule de Salomon, roy des Hébreux*. Armed with this, you may venture during the most advanced hours of the night into the most cut-throat and ill-famed quarters of the capitals of the five divisions of the globe, for "it has a virtue so great," says the explanatory legend, "that, being armed with it, if you are attacked by any man you shall not be hurt by him or wounded when you fight with him, and his own weapons shall turn against him." It is formed with eight radial lines, at the ends of which are written eight Hebrew letters in a mysterious character which Cornelius Agrippa, *La Philosophie occulte*, Book II, chapter xxx, calls "Malachim script." He says this is "the ancient script used by Moses and the Prophets, the form of which must not be rashly revealed to anyone." Starting from the highest point and reading anti-clockwise, the letters

are *aleph*, *caph*, *he*, *jod*, *mem*, *beth*, *beth*, and *resh*. Round the circumference runs verse 15 of Psalm xxxvii, "Gladius eorum intret in corda ipsorum, et arcus eorum confringatur." [1]

Fig. 315. Talisman against Sudden Death

Les Clavicules de Rabbi Salomon. Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, manuscript No. 2346. Eighteenth century.

Here is another very precious talisman (Fig. 315), "against sudden deaths and accidents causing them on Saturday under Saturn." This planet being inauspicious, Saturday is naturally an evil day against which it behoves one to protect oneself. Let us therefore thank the author of manuscript No. 2346 in the Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal for helping us out of our sorry plight. His talisman is very simple; it consists of a double circle forming a diadem containing the traditional emblem of the Intelligence of Saturn twice repeated and the names Zaziel and Asiel. An eight-pointed figure inscribed inside the circle is also a sign of the Intelligence of Saturn, according to Cornelius Agrippa.

The worthy Curé Belot has provided an excellent talisman for orators and all persons who lack a good memory and desire to acquire one. "The following figure [Fig. 316] must be constructed," he says, in his *Œuvres*, Book III, chapter v.

Fig. 316. Talisman for Persons desiring a Good Memory

J. B. Belot, *Œuvres* (Liége, 1704). Author's collection.

> On the right side *alpha* must be set, *mu* at the top, and *omega* in the centre at the bottom, and these letters have affinity with the Hebrew characters *aleph*, *mem*, *shin*. It must be noted that this figure is to be made on gold or pure silver, or even, for the best sort, upon mercury congealed and rendered fusible. The commoner kind may be made (as I have seen) upon parchment or membrane of the fox or hyena; these animals must be killed when the sun is in one of the houses of Mercury which are in Gemini or Virgo. . . . The manner of using the talisman is thus: In the evening read, or have read to you, such discourse or lecture or the like upon a given science or art as you desire to be able to pronounce. This should be read over once or twice and pondered, and afterward you will go to bed, placing this figure under your head, and you will read over the discourse relating to the given science as

[1] "Their sword shall enter into their own heart, and their bows shall be broken."

before and write *alpha* and *omega* in your left hand. In the morning the discourse or lecture will be present to your mind, and you will not be able, even though you should wish it, to omit or forget a single sentence or particle in repeating it.

Fig. 317. Talisman for making a Fortune

Secrets merveilleux de la magie naturelle et cabalistique du Petit Albert.

Author's collection.

The process is certainly not one of the easiest to realize, but the advantages it affords will fully compensate for any difficulties experienced in obtaining hyena-parchment.

We must take care not to forget talismans for making a fortune. Their utility needs no demonstrating, and my readers will certainly agree that they are the most precious of all. The 1722 Cologne edition of *Le Petit Albert* generously provides us with one which must be fastened to the hat (Fig. 317). It represents Fortune, standing on a sphere, eluding a hand which issues from a cloud and offers her a heart. The words *Reluctante*, written upside down, and *Eriam Fortuna* appear respectively above and below the hand. The talisman, this excellent book tells us, " may be made on well-cleansed virgin parchment at the day and hour of Jupiter, the scheme of the heavens wearing a fortunate aspect."

The same book—which is absolutely determined on making us rich—presents us with another talisman " for being fortunate in gaming or commerce." We owe it to the famous sorcerer and necromancer Arbatel. This talisman is double-sided (Fig. 318) ; in the middle of one side the Hebrew word *Ghibor*, " the Powerful," can be made out, in addition to the Tetragrammaton and some scarcely legible names in reversed characters.

Fig. 318. Talisman for Success in Gaming and Commerce

Secrets merveilleux de la magie naturelle et cabalistique du Petit Albert.

Author's collection.

Under the laconic style of " Pentacle for treasures " the *Grimoire du Pape Honorius le Grand* gives, without further explanation, a valuable talisman (Fig. 319) by means of which it should be possible to amass great wealth. Round the circumference of one side we read the words *Bolkuk*, *Selix*, and *Kakob* in Greek letters, and *Karea papos lopio* in the middle. *Tikl*, *nomiou*, and *Dc* are written on the other side, accompanied by symbols relating to the planetary intelligences.

In the course of any investigation of talismans it would be matter for much

surprise if we did not meet with Catherine de Médicis, the queen-witch in whose existence occultism held so large a place. She did, in fact, possess a talisman which is still famous, although few people have seen an exact representation of it. An extremely rare engraving of this talisman is in existence; I know of only one proof, which I believe to be unique. It is bound up at the end of a copy, preserved in the Bibliothèque Nationale, of the famous lampoon attributed to Henri Estienne, *Discours merveilleux de la vie, actions et déportemens de Catherine de Médicis* (1575).

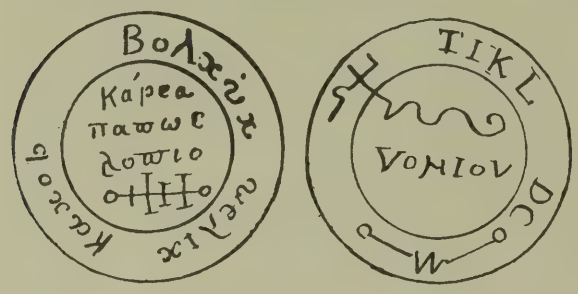


Fig. 319. Talisman for discovering Treasures
Grimoire du Pape Honorius le Grand. Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, manuscript No. 2494.

The two faces of this talisman are reproduced in Fig. 320. That on the left shows Jupiter seated on his throne with the eagle of Ganymede in front of him. A demon with the head of Anubis is holding a mirror up to him, and we see the words *Anael*, *He*, *Amic*, and *Oxiel*, and the conventional symbols for Jupiter, his intelligence, and his demon. That on the right represents Catherine de Médicis herself, so it is said, as a naked Venus; the planetary hieroglyph of this divinity is at the top of the design, and elsewhere we see the words *Naniel*, *Ebvleb* (Beelzebub), and *Asmodei*, and the symbols of Venus. The talisman is accompanied by the following curious note:

> This Princess carried it always about her; it was contrived and fashioned by the Sieur Regnier, a famous mathematician who passed for a sorcerer, in whom she had much confidence. It is asserted that the virtue of this talisman is for sovereign governance and knowledge of the future, and that it was compounded of human blood, the blood of a he-goat, and several sorts of metals melted together under certain particular constellations bound up with the nativity of this Princess. The original of this talisman, found and broken after her death, which happened at Blois the fifth day of January, 1579 (1589?), she being then aged seventy years, is now preserved in the Cabinet of the Abbé Fauvel, who has caused it to be thus very faithfully engraved and copied.

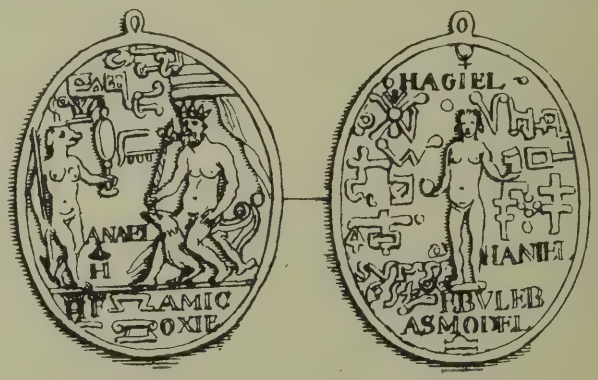


Fig. 320. Catherine de Médicis' Magic Talisman
Henri Estienne, *Discours merveilleux de la vie, actions et déportemens de Catherine de Médicis* (1575). Bibliothèque Nationale, L. 34b, 827B.

We must further include among talismans the famous objects in 'sigillate earthenware.' These were once much employed in medicine, and there is a large

collection of them in the Germanic Museum at Nuremberg. They were little tablets of different kinds of earthenware impressed with seals corresponding to their nature, and in certain illnesses were applied to the affected parts in order to cure them. Use was also made of stones formed inside the bodies of certain animals, such as the bezoar, which is found in the stomachs of Asiatic deer and goats. Boëtius de Boot, in his *Parfait Joaillier* (Lyons, 1644), relates many marvels of this stone; it preserved from all poisons, venoms, and pestilential airs. The stone alleged to exist in a toad's head was another sure talisman for obtaining almost perfect earthly happiness. Johannes de Cuba, in his *Hortus Sanitatis*, has indicated a method, at once practical and elegant, of extracting this stone which I specially commend to my readers (Fig. 321).

Fig. 321. Method of extracting the Talismanic Stone from a Toad's Head
Johannes de Cuba, *Hortus Sanitatis* (Paris, about 1498).

We should also discuss the abraxas, the talismans of Paracelsus, Cornelius Agrippa, Gaffarel, Père Ménestrier, d'Odoucet, and many others, but I cannot enlarge further on this subject, which would need a treatise to itself. In conclusion, however, I will mention, among natural talismans, that mysterious plant the mandrake. Many marvels have been told about this, but our knowledge of it is still vague. Nowadays we apply the name to a sort of solanum, *Atropa mandragora*; this is probably not of the same nature as those plants called dodaim in the Bible, which Reuben brought to his mother Leah and which so strongly excited the envy of Rachel. Biblical commentators regard it as the supreme plant of Venus, which confers fruitfulness upon barren women. Attempts have been made to identify dodaim with the lily and with various plants called amomum, helicabum, calathum, and the rest. St Hildegard (*Physica*, liber I, "De Plantis") devotes a fairly long notice to the mandrake. "It is hot," she says, "something watery, and formed of the moistened earth wherewith Adam was created; hence is it that this herb, being made in man's likeness, ministers much more than other plants to the suggestion of the Devil; according to man's desire good or evil may be aroused at will, as was done aforetime with idols." The saintly abbess does not omit to point out this plant's odd habit of dividing into two kinds—the male, made in the image of man, "species masculi hujus herbæ," and the female, made in the image of woman,

" species feminæ hujus herbæ." All writers of the Middle Ages who have spoken of the mandrake have drawn this distinction. The work by Johannes de Cuba already cited, *Hortus Sanitatis*, gives a double figure of the plant strongly emphasizing its alleged resemblance to man and woman (Figs. 322 and 323).

It looks as if the name ' mandrake ' may have been applied to very strong plant-

Fig. 322. Male Mandrake
Johannes de Cuba, *Hortus Sanitatis*.

Fig. 323. Female Mandrake
Johannes de Cuba, *Hortus Sanitatis*.

roots shaped like little statuettes of the human figure. It was believed that small familiar demons took up their abode in these plants. Mandrakes revealed knowledge of the future by shaking their heads when questions were put to them. They were once widely distributed in Germany, and were utilized, among other ways, in medicine. I have seen one of them, enclosed in a little crystal tube, in the remarkable Galleries of Ancient Pharmacy at the Germanic Museum in Nuremberg.

BOOK III
ALCHEMISTS

I
THE SECRET DOCTRINE

AN had sought to penetrate the mystery of the invisible worlds and to dispel the darkness surrounding future things, and now a third mystery no less provocative was presented to his curiosity—the riddle of nature remained unread; matter kept the secret of its forms, varieties, and transformations.

Certainly philosophers like Aristotle or Theophrastus had not omitted to discourse on "natural things," but only by way of describing the external accidents of matter which every one of us can see. There was one doctrine, alchemy, which claimed to penetrate the mystery of life and of the formation of inanimate substances.

To many people who have not studied it alchemy is no more than an accumulation of musings and incoherent digressions resulting from man's vain endeavour to make artificial gold, to which he was impelled either by sordid cupidity or the arrogant folly of wishing to equal the Creator. Those, however, who study the alchemy which lies outside these baser preoccupations will not be slow in discovering that it has an attraction the appeal of which cannot be described. In the shadowy edifice of the medieval sciences this science beams like those giant rose-windows—still, silent, remote from the vulgarities of life—which bathe the transepts of slumbering cathedrals in ineffable light.

One of the first precise notions gleaned from reading authors who have treated of alchemy is that this science is based on a secret reserved for only a few privileged adepts possessing the intellectual and moral qualities requisite for obtaining it. Difficult and narrow is the way, and many are those who stray in treading it into wrong paths, where they are to find only deceit, error, and falsehood, which will beguile them into expending vast sums in sheer waste. This truth has been remarkably expounded by Heinrich Khunrath in one of the plates of his *Amphitheatrum æternæ sapientiæ*. The plate represents the Alchemic Citadel (Fig. 324), which symbolizes the science of Hermes. This citadel is surrounded by a large circle divided into twenty-one compartments, each with an entrance. Twenty of these have no exit, and are barred by the enormous wall which parts them from the

citadel. They signify the twenty roads in which seekers after the alchemic doctrine can go astray. Inscriptions indicate the false activities which these roads represent; there is the attempt to transmute silver into gold, or, even worse, to transmute ordinary mercury, and so on. And since these twenty compartments communicate

Fig. 324. The Alchemic Citadel
Heinrich Khunrath, *Amphitheatrum æternæ sapientiæ* (Hanau, 1609).

with one another the amateur philosopher may wander a long time before recognizing his foolishness. The twenty-first way, that which opens in the front of the figure, is the true path. But scarcely has the adept entered it than he collides with a warden who bars him from the sill of a light drawbridge spanning the broad moat filled with water which isolates the citadel. Many conditions are required of him—

knowledge of the material of the Great Work, the name by which the result of the great alchemic operation of transmutation into gold was designated, as well as of its preparation ; then faith, silence, and lastly good works.

For all alchemists taught what few people suspect—that one cannot succeed in attaining the secret of gold unless one has an upright and honest soul. Alchemy is not a purely physical science ; personal qualities are rigorously exacted by it. In his *Cinq Livres* (Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, manuscript No. 3019) Nicolas Valois, an alchemist of the fifteenth century, says expressly : " The good God granted me this divine secret through my prayers and the good intentions I had of using it well ; the science is lost if purity of heart is lost." That is why, in the engraving under discussion, we see some future adepts who have not been able to cross the drawbridge, but have managed to climb on to the top of the wall surrounding the moat, whence they look into the alchemic citadel whose secrets they know well, though they are incapable of reaching it.

To conclude, a happy initiate has succeeded in passing through the gate of the citadel, which is surmounted by the hieroglyph of philosophic mercury. Two prudent counsels have greeted him : " Pray theosophically and work physico-chemically." Then he traverses the seven angles of the citadel, answering to the seven transmutative operations—dissolution, purification, introduction into the sealed vessel or fiery furnace, which is represented here by the words *Azoth pondus*, solution by putrefaction, multiplication, fermentation, and projection. Finally the adept reaches the desired goal—the famous Philosopher's Stone, which is guarded by an enormous dragon who yields it only to those who have accomplished the requisite operations.

My readers are already familiar with the names of various operations of the Great Work, and will henceforth be able to form a conclusion of the highest importance—namely, that from the fifteenth century onward alchemic science, or that manifestation of it which adepts claim as the true science, is presented as a complete doctrine, unalterable, never clearly expounded, but defined under a symbolism the forms of which were to remain invariable down to our own day ; a mysterious doctrine which could not progress, since it had reached its point of perfection in one stride, and could not undergo a modification for which there was no necessity. Adepts who have comprehended the science are in agreement on this doctrine, and, deaf to the recriminations of modern chemistry—which they very well understand—repeat the same traditional expressions, veiled in the same traditional allegories. It is by virtue of this unchanging agreement that we find Cyliani and Cambriel, for instance, two alchemists who operated about 1830, speaking exactly the same metaphorical language as Nicolas Flamel or Basile Valentin, who lived in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries respectively.

Alongside these we have the scrambling throng of the uninitiate, who have utterly failed to penetrate the secret of the true doctrine and continue working on anomalous materials which will never bring them to the desired result. These are the false alchemists, who are called Puffers.

It is not then from alchemy, as often stated, that modern chemistry derives, but actually from the erratic work of the Puffers. These spent themselves in experiments on alien substances condemned by the true adepts, and so never achieved the desired result—that is, the Philosopher's Stone—but were led by chance into unexpected discoveries. We may take as an instance Kunckel, who isolated phosphorus, which he was certainly not looking for, or Blaise de Vigenère, who discovered benzoic acid without being aware of it.

It is essential to establish this distinction if we hope to direct our course with any certainty through the literature of alchemy without arriving at the opinion Buffon expressed in his *Histoire des Minéraux*. In the article on gold he exclaims, with a dash of the bitterness felt by a great man who believes himself hoaxed, " It must be admitted that nothing can be got from books on alchemy. Neither the *Table hermétique*, the *Tourbe des Philosophes*, nor Philalethes and various others whom I have taken the trouble to read and even study seriously, have offered me anything but obscurities and unintelligible processes." The persistence of the same formulas in all these authors ought nevertheless to have made him understand that they were concerned with a hidden doctrine upon which they were all in agreement.

An attentive reader of any alchemic book will not fail to note one important fact —that is, the identity affirmed by adepts to exist invariably between the creation of the Cosmos and the operation by which they achieve the Great Work. By reason of the law of analogy of which I have already spoken they acknowledge that the first chapter of Genesis is the greatest page in alchemy ; whoever has understood the mystery of the creation of the heavens, the earth, the waters, light, the animals, and man knows the secret of the Philosopher's Stone. The athanor, or furnace, in which transmutation is effected is a matrix in the shape of an egg, like the world itself, which is a gigantic egg, the Orphic egg which is found at the basis of all initiations, whether in Egypt or in Greece. And again just as the Spirit of the Lord—Ruach Elohim—moved upon the face of the waters, so must float over the waters of the athanor the spirit of the world, the spirit of life which the alchemist must be skilful enough to master. An old alchemistic book by Mylius entitled *Basilica philosophica* has exhibited this analogy very happily in a beautiful plate by J. B. Mérian (Fig. 325). In the upper part of the plate is the world, or Cosmos, expressed in a symbolic synthesis—the celestial world, represented by the angels and the Tetragrammaton, or Name of the Lord ; the planetary and zodiacal world ; and

the terrestrial world formed of its proper elements. Below is man, Adam, analogous to the Sun or gold, the male element, and woman, Eve, an analogue of the Moon or silver, the female element; both are agents of the alchemic operation, and are bound to the Macrocosm by chains. In the centre is the terrestrial Paradise with the seven metals, the whole interspersed with enigmatic figures of which I shall

Fig. 325. Analogy of the Alchemic Microcosm to the Macrocosm
Mylius, *Chymica: Basilica philosophica* (Frankfort, 1620).

speak later. The progression followed in the formation of the world is the same as that of animal gestation, and metallic generation can only be the same. That is why all the alchemists stubbornly repeat so often that their sole master is Nature, that books are not necessary for perfecting the Great Work, and that it suffices for success to look with open eyes and imitate Nature. Président Jean d'Espagnet, in his *Enchiridion physicæ restitutæ* (Paris, 1651), begins by retracing the phases of the creation of the world, which he postulates as the foundation of the progression of the Work. "Whoever," says he, "does not know that the Spirit who drew the world out of

nothingness and governs it is the soul of the world knows not the laws of the universe " ; and he insists on knowledge of " the second nature, which is the Spirit of the Universe—that is to say, a vivifying virtue of the light which was created in the beginning and has been united to the body of the Sun ; this is what Zoroaster and Heracles called the soul of the world."

On account of this constant imitation of Nature the alchemists styled themselves the supreme " Philosophers " and " Sages," their science " Philosophy," and the product of their labours the " Philosopher's Stone."

I have spoken of a powerfully expressive symbolism transmitted by the alchemists from age to age as a precious trust, which is so unalterable in its forms that a person uninitiated in alchemy may at once recognize a work, picture, or object of alchemic signification without knowing its meaning. To say truth, although Pernety taught that the whole body of Greek mythology served only to mask the unfolding of the alchemic operations, no trace of this symbolism can be found in works by ancient authors, such as the Democritic treatises, Zosimus, Roger Bacon, and Albertus Magnus, or in the Arabs Morien, Geber, and others. It seems to me that it made its first appearance in a book by the Parisian alchemist Nicolas Flamel entitled *Explication des Figures hiéroglyphiques mises par moy Nicolas Flamel, escripvain, dans le cimetière des Innocens, en la quatrième arche*. These figures in the Charnier des Innocents in Paris existed until the beginning of the nineteenth century, when the cemetery was swept away and replaced by the present Place des Innocents. Nicolas Flamel says that he had them copied from a still-famous manuscript the author of which was a Jew named Abraham. The manuscript came into his hands in 1357 ; he was hardly able to estimate its date, but says it was " very old and very great ; it was not on paper or parchment, as others, but was made wholly of the thin bark, as it seemed to me, of tender young trees." We shall not be far out in assuming that this book—clearly Oriental by the description—was at least a hundred years old, which brings the figures it contains to about the mid-thirteenth century at latest.

The frescoes painted by Nicolas Flamel under the fourth arcade of the Charnier des Innocents have happily been preserved for us in a very beautiful eighteenth-century print here reproduced (Fig. 326). In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries they were a goal of pilgrimage for alchemists, and numerous descriptions of them have been given. Nicolas Flamel himself has interpreted the lower figures ; the upper are described, with some variations, in two manuscripts in the Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal entitled *Les Figures d'Abraham le Juif* (Nos. 2518 and 3047), and I summarize the interpretations below.

At the top of the engraving, running from left to right, we find seven figures reading as follows :

(1) Mercury holding caduceus; Saturn in a cloud, armed with his scythe. Interpretation: maceration of common mercury, mixed with common salt and vitriol, by the god Mercury, whose legs Saturn is cutting off with his scythe.

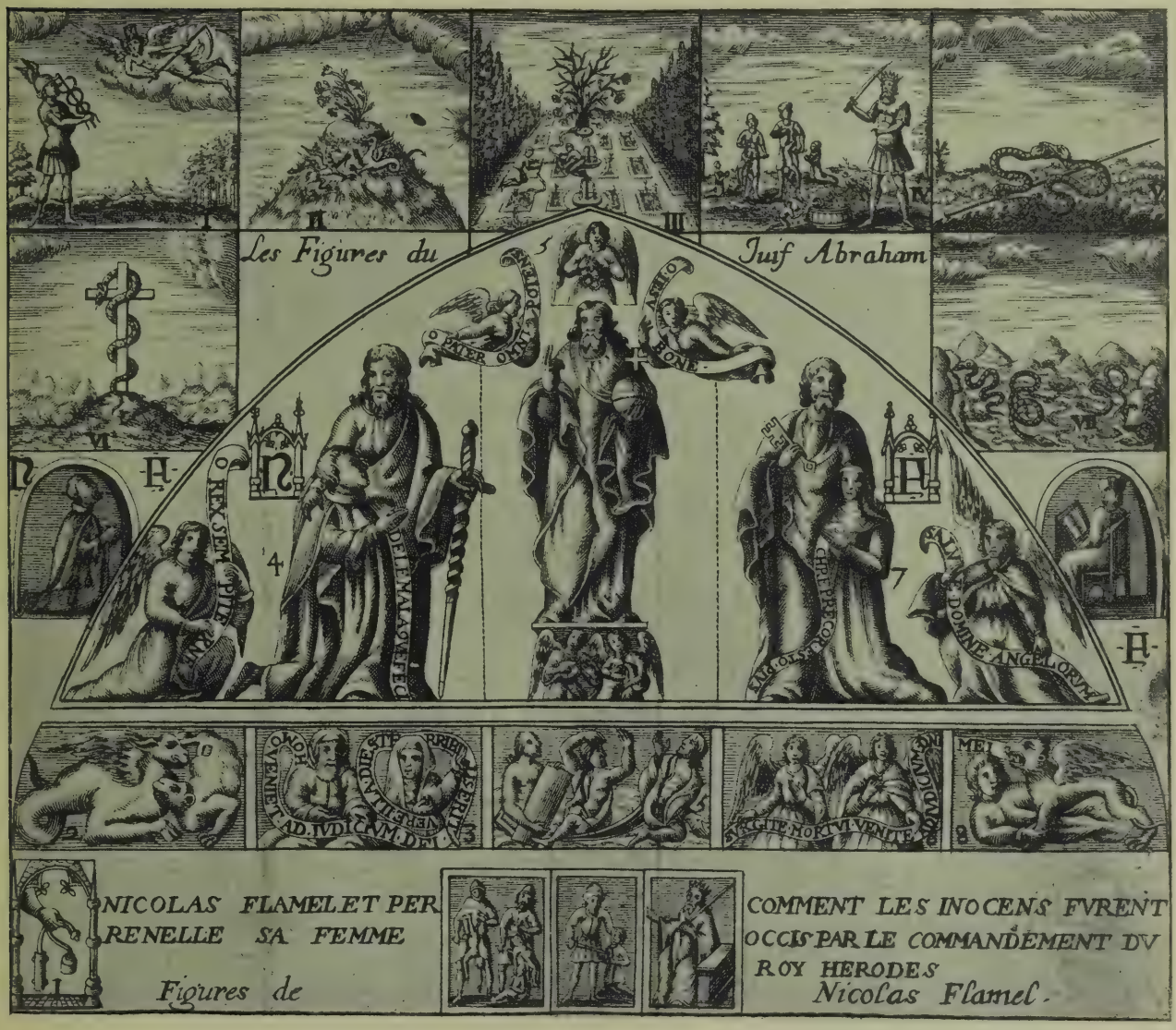


Fig. 326. The Alchemic Figures of Abraham the Jew
Frescoes by Nicolas Flamel in the Charnier des Innocents (eighteenth-century print).
Author's collection.

(2) A mountain with seven caverns and seven black-and-yellow serpents; one serpent devouring another has golden wings; at the foot is one griffin trying to eat another; on the summit of the mountain is a bough with golden branches bearing red and white flowers and tossed by the north wind. Interpretation: sublimation of the macerated

mercury by a flower shaken by the wind and guarded by two winged dragons.

(3) The Garden of the Hesperides enclosed with hedges. In the middle an oak-stock and a rose-bush with golden leaves. A rivulet springs from the foot of the oak, and blind men are seeking for the rivulet, but cannot find it. Interpretation : revivification of the sublimated mercury by a spring which issues from the foot of a rose-bush planted in a beautiful garden.

(4) A crowned king (King Herod) in a field orders the massacre of the Innocents ; soldiers are filling a vat with their blood ; the sun and moon are bathing in the blood. Seven children are dead. Interpretation: preparation of worked silver or gold by unprepared common mercury, represented by the sun and moon bathing in the children's blood.

(5) A caduceus formed of two serpents swallowing each other twined round a golden rod. Interpretation : solution and volatilization ; the two serpents are the two parts of the resolved metal, one earthy, the other watery, which have to be fixed by each other.

(6) A dead serpent crucified. Interpretation : coagulation and fixation of the volatilizate.

(7) A desert with four springs from which rivers are flowing ; four small serpents are creeping about the desert. Interpretation : multiplication, represented by the springs and the serpents.

Below these figures are seen those of Nicolas Flamel and his wife, Perrenelle, St Peter, St Paul, and God the Father; these also are given alchemic significations by Nicolas Flamel. In the lower compartments are two dragons, male and female, signifying the fixate and the volatilizate ; a man and a woman—that is, " the two natures reconciled " ; three resuscitated bodies which are " the body, the soul, and the spirit of the White Stone " ; two angels and a man holding a lion's paw, which signifies the achievement of the Work.

Alchemists transmitted the tradition of figures of this type to one another with perfect integrity and tireless patience. The documents they illustrate are so numerous that mention must be restricted to a few of them only. In the foreground of the beautiful plate by Mylius, reproduced previously (Fig. 325), we see the Phœnix, emblem of the resurrection as well as of the alchemic mystery, and opposite him an eagle ; both are sheltering globes under their wings, and the different phases of transmutation are unfolding on the globes. The two pictured vases illustrating a book by Libavius, *Alchymia recognita, emendata et aucta*, belong to

SYMBOLISM OF THE OPERATIONS OF THE PHILOSOPHER'S STONE:
THE ALCHEMIC SUBLIMATION

From *Figures d'Abraham Juif* (seventeenth-century).
Bibliothèque Nationale, MS. fonds français 14765

the same school of symbolism (Figs. 327 and 328); they show man and woman, the eagle with three heads, the two natures enchained by Mercury, the hydra with seven heads (the seven metals), the Sun and Moon, the dragon biting his tail, etc.

In his *Elementa chymiæ* Barckhausen exhibits a very great wealth of figures,

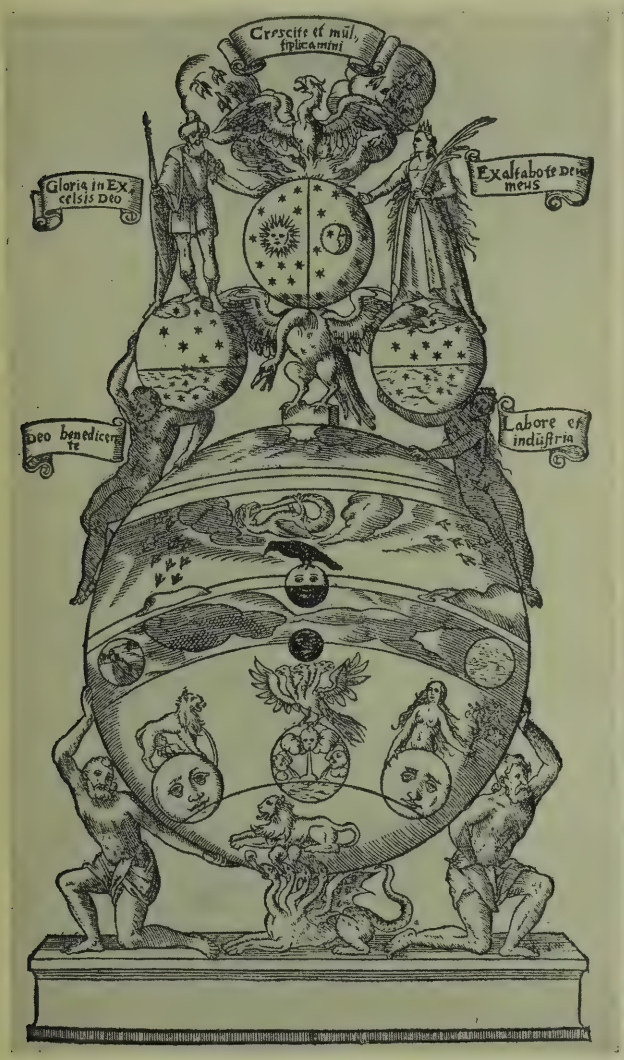


Fig. 327. Paradigm of the Philosophic Work
Libavius, *Alchymia recognita, emendata et aucta* (Frankfort, 1606).
Author's collection.

Fig. 328. Paradigm of the Philosophic Work
Libavius, *Alchymia recognita, emendata et aucta.*
Author's collection.

from which I will choose two (Figs. 329 and 330). In these we recognize without trouble the first Matter, generator of the seven metals, from which it has to be extracted. Then we see the Great Work evolving in a sealed vase which is the philosophic egg, and we may remark the striking analogy between this operation and the formation of the Cosmos from chaos at the time of the Creation. Next the Philosopher's Stone appears under the influence of the divine fire surrounding the

vase, in the form of a royal crown carried by an angel. A seventeenth-century manuscript in the Bibliothèque Nationale, richly illuminated and entitled *Les Figures d'Abraham Juif*, is a transcription, with variations, of the figures in the Charnier des Innocents, and represents sublimation in an analogous style (see plate facing p. 354). Seven eagle-headed griffins and seven black griffins, signifying gold and mercury, are watching a tree with golden leaves, which must be the result of the operation.

Fig. 329. THE GREAT WORK
Barckhausen, *Elementa chymiæ* (Leyden, 1718).

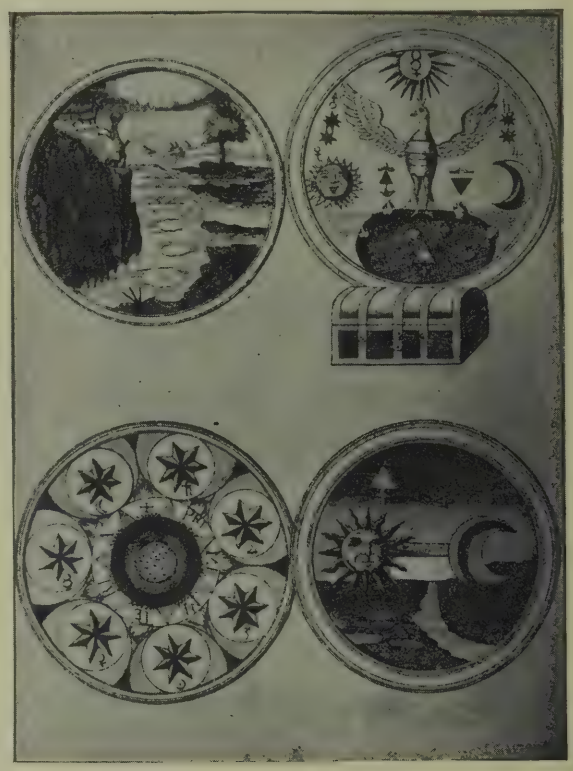


Fig. 330. THE GREAT WORK
Barckhausen, *Elementa chymiæ*.

A very little-known manuscript entitled *Les cinq Livres de Nicolas Valois, compagnon du Seigneur Grosparmy* contains an exquisite miniature (Fig. 331) which, to an initiate alchemist, represents the definitive synthesis of his art. Grosparmy was a *seigneur*, a native of Normandy, who wrote on alchemy in 1449. He had Nicolas Valois for friend and disciple, and they and a priest, Vicot, formed the most interesting trio of alchemists of the fifteenth century. The miniature which I reproduce was executed in the seventeenth century by an unknown artist who had thoroughly impressed his mind with their doctrine; it shows how profound and exact that doctrine was, under the secrecy enfolding it. *La Clef de la Grande Science sur l'ouvrage philosophique inconnu jusqu'à présent* also affords some pretty miniatures. In one of them (Fig. 332) five alchemists are settling among themselves that

" Dissolution, maceration, sublimation, division, and composition " are the essential operations of the Work, while above them appear the Sun and Moon, the dragon biting his own tail, and other symbols. In another of these miniatures the operation called maceration is symbolized in an ingenious fashion (Fig. 333). The dragon with a flock of birds flying away from him indicates the eternal renewal of things

Fig. 331. Symbolic Synthesis of the Great Work
Les cinq Livres de Nicolas Valois. Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, manuscript No. 3019.

ceaselessly achieved by Nature and her imitator, the alchemist. Finally, a third illumination (Fig. 334) shows the hermetic androgyne with two faces, half man, half woman, between the tree of the Sun and the tree of the Moon. Below are the Mount of Mercury, the Mount of the Sun, the Mount of the Moon, the dragon with two heads, and running water—all imageries familiar to alchemists.

The eminent English alchemist Elias Ashmole, founder of the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford, illustrated his *Theatrum chemicum Britannicum* with figures which my readers will already be able to recognize easily. One shows the bird of

Fig. 332. The Operations of the Alchemic Work
La Clef de la Grande Science sur l'ouvrage philosophique inconnu jusqu'à présent.
Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, manuscript No. 6577.

Fig. 333. The Eternal Renewal of Things in the Midst of Decay
La Clef de la Grande Science.

Fig. 334. The Hermetic Androgyne and the Chief Alchemic Symbols
La Clef de la Grande Science.

Hermes (Fig. 335), represented by the eagle descending from the sky between the two necks of a double-headed dragon ; one head points toward the Sun, the other

Fig. 335. The Bird of Hermes and the Alchemic Dragon with Two Heads, showing the Animation of the Work by Celestial Influence
Elias Ashmole, *Theatrum chemicum Britannicum* (London, 1652).

Fig. 336. Synthesis of the Alchemic Operations
Elias Ashmole, *Theatrum chemicum Britannicum.*

Fig. 337. The Hermetic Spring
Salomon Trismosin, *Aureum Vellus* (Rorschach, 1598).

toward the Moon. Another (Fig. 336), more complete, once again shows the man and the woman, the two dragons, the vase of Hermes containing the Sun and Moon, with seven metallic streams flowing from it, and the whole supported by an angel ;

this last detail indicates that an influx from the sky is necessary for obtaining the secret fire which allows the Stone to be achieved. The *Aureum Vellus*—a book by Salomon Trismosin, an obscure German author who styled himself the " Preceptor of Paracelsus "—also follows the method of Abraham the Jew and Flamel. Here (Fig. 337) once more we see the stream flowing from the oak. It is surmounted by a royal crown (this is not shown in the part of the illustration reproduced) in con-

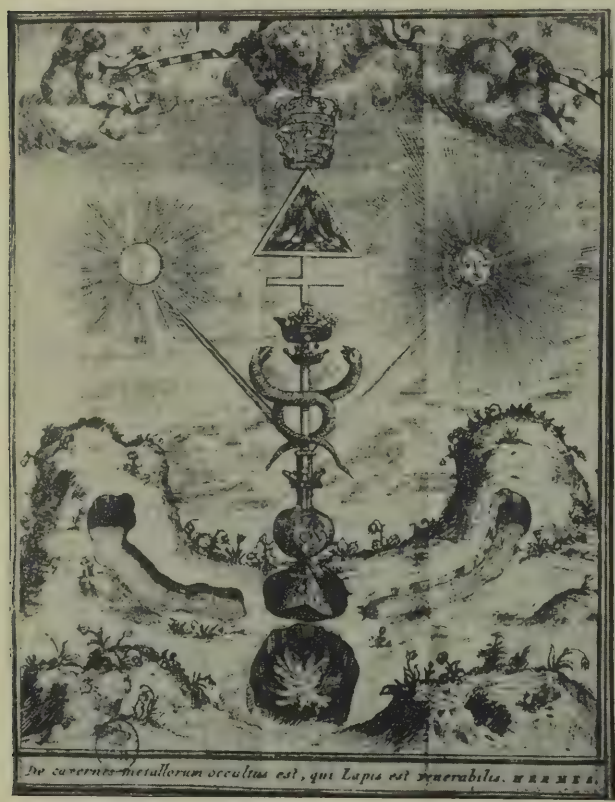


Fig. 338. THE MERCURIAL HIEROGLYPH
Limojon de Saint-Didier, *Le Triomphe hermétique* (Amsterdam, 1710).

Fig. 339. THE MATERIAL OF THE WORK
Basile Valentin, *L'Azoth des philosophes* (Paris, 1659). Author's collection.

formity with the tradition of the alchemists, most of whom called the Stone " our great King " ; the *Opuscule de la Philosophie naturelle des métaux*, by Zachaire, affords a notable instance of the use of this term.

Among the most expressive symbols of the Philosopher's Stone is that in Limojon de Saint-Didier's *Le Triomphe hermétique*, which is reproduced in Fig. 338. The mercurial symbol stands up in the middle of this picture, coupled with the symbol of sulphur ; above it is the zodiacal sign of the Bull, which belongs to the achievement of the Work. The inception of the Work must take place when the Sun is in the Ram. There are two caverns, one on each side of the central symbol, which are the mines of Mercury ; this is the legend which relates to them : " De cavernis

metallorum occultus est, qui Lapis est venerabilis " (" The thing that is the venerable Stone was hidden in the caverns of the metals "). This accords with the unvarying tradition of the alchemists, who will have it that the material of the Philosopher's Stone, unknown to the profane, is a black ball which is found at a depth of a foot and a half in certain hot areas such as exist in Hungary, for example. Children play with these balls, and men disregard them and tread on them. I also reproduce five vignettes from *L'Azoth, ou le moyen de faire l'or caché des philosophes*, by Basile Valentin. The first shows man carrying the universe (Fig. 339), with this elucidatory inscription, "Visita Interiora Terræ, Rectificando Invenies Occultum Lapidem" (" Visit the inner parts of the earth; by rectification thou shalt find the occult stone "). If the initials of these seven words are put together they form the Hermetic term 'vitriol.' The uninitiate would be strangely deceived, all the same, if they imagined they could obtain the Philosopher's Stone by means of sulphuric acid; the Vitriol of the Sages is intended here, and the secret of this is never revealed by alchemists. A triple face on the ground signifies prudence, and a child reading the alphabet indicates that the Philosopher's Stone is a work of infantine simplicity. Then we have the goddess " born of our deep Sea [Fig. 340], who pours milk and blood from her paps "; after boiling the milk and blood will be changed into gold and silver. The " envenomed dragon " (Fig. 341) represents that primitive material " found everywhere and of little price, from the mass whereof the green and red lion will be drawn." Under the guise of " the dead King " (Fig. 342) we have the operation necessary for the revivification of the mercury which is compared to a resurrection. The last of these pictures—one of the finest alchemic designs in existence—once more summarizes the whole Work (Fig. 343), and displays once more all the known symbols. In addition it affords one valuable piece of guidance —the Sun assimilated to the soul; the Moon to the spirit, and the Body to the cubic Stone, at which the darkened point of Saturn is directed, a potent symbol which would call for whole pages of commentary. We must not forget the splendid plate

Fig. 340. THE SIREN OF THE PHILOSOPHERS
Basile Valentin, *L'Azoth des philosophes.*
Author's collection.

of the Three Riders in the French manuscript *Les Figures d'Abraham Juif*, which represents what adepts call the Fire of Hell (see plate facing this page). The first rider, mounted on a black lion, indicates gold in maceration; the second, on a red lion, indicates the inner ferment; the third, mounted on a white lion and crowned, has vanquished death.

Fig. 341. The Envenomed Dragon, the Primitive Material of the Philosopher's Stone
Basile Valentin, *L'Azoth des philosophes*.
Author's collection.

There is no room to give the series of twelve figures which decorate *Les douze Clefs de philosophie*, by Basile Valentin (Paris, 1659), or the splendid plates in the *Trésor de la philosophie des anciens*, by Barent Coenders von Helpen (Cologne, 1693), or the sixteen medallions signed "H. H. Pfau, 1702" ornamenting the great stove in German pottery-ware exhibited in the Museum of Arts and Crafts at Winterthur in Switzerland, or the splendid stained-glass windows in the sacristy of Saint-Étienne-du-Mont at Paris. These would provide complete confirmation of the truth that alchemists have an unvarying secret doctrine and that once their symbols are interpreted in their exact sense they can no longer stray into fruitless quests or wrong paths.

Fig. 342. The Dead King
Basile Valentin, *L'Azoth des philosophes*.
Author's collection.

This hieroglyphic system, however, was not the only one employed by alchemists. There was another, more ancient and certainly more traditional, which rested on the evident correlation existing between the Christian mystery and the alchemic mystery. I have already drawn attention to this correlation in commenting on the hieroglyphs of the Divine Heart given by L'Agneau (Fig. 180), which have an undeniable alchemistic sense. Sauval, in his *Histoire et recherches des antiquités de la ville de Paris* (1724), points out the importance of the sculptures on Notre-Dame at Paris as alchemic emblems. "All the doorways of Notre-Dame Cathedral are covered with hieroglyphs," he says. "The figure of

SYMBOLISM OF THE OPERATIONS OF THE PHILOSOPHER'S STONE:
THE THREE COLOURS OF THE WORK

From *Figures d'Abraham Juif* (seventeenth-century).
Bibliothèque Nationale, MS. fonds français 14765

St Christopher (now destroyed) is the grandest colossus in the kingdom ; hermetists take it for a hieroglyph. The figure of Mercury or Æsculapius—or, according to others, of Guillaume, Bishop of Paris—still passes with some for a hieroglyph." This agrees very well with what Zachaire relates in his *Opuscule très excellent de la vraye philosophie naturelle des métaux* (Lyons, 1612) ; he says that the alchemists of the sixteenth century held their meetings in the cathedral of Notre-Dame, and Noël du Fail confirms this in chapter x of his *Contes et discours d'Eutrapel*, where he says that "in his time the great haunt of such academicians was Notre-Dame at Paris."

Fig. 343. Another Synthesis of the Work
Basile Valentin, *L'Azoth des philosophes*.
Author's collection.

The principal alchemic hieroglyph of Notre-Dame is the statue of a bishop, known as St Marcellus, on the central pillar of the southern doorway of the main front. In his *Cours de Philosophie hermétique* (Paris, 1843) Cambriel has given an explanation of this figure ; on both sides of the pedestal of the statue are round ornaments representing the crude and worked states of the metals, which are the body of the Work. Below the Bishop is a man with only his head showing, in a kind of coffer from which flames are issuing. Climbing out of this coffer is

> the Babylonian dragon, or philosophers' mercury, in which all the virtues of the metallic states are combined. The end of this dragon's tail is clinging to the man, to show that the dragon comes out of him, and both his claws are gripping the athanor to show that he must be put into it during digestion. . . . Philosophers' mercury is put into a glass egg, and during digestion this egg is put into the athanor, or vaulted furnace ; it is on this vault that the Bishop's feet are placed, and the life represented by him results from the mercury.

Above the Bishop's head is a kind of canopy exactly like the lid of the "digestion furnace" of the alchemists.

We must note one curious fact in this connexion. The statue of St Marcellus at present seen on the Notre-Dame doorway is a modern reproduction of no archæological value; it forms part of the restoration carried out by the architects Lassus and Viollet-le-Duc. The original fourteenth-century statue is now to be found tucked away in a corner of the great Salle des Thermes at the Musée de Cluny, where I had it photographed (Fig. 344). It will be seen that the Bishop's crozier is thrust into the dragon's throat. This is an essential condition if any meaning is to be read into the hieroglyph; it signifies that a shaft of celestial light is necessary for kindling the fire of the athanor. Now, at a time which must have been toward the middle of the sixteenth century this ancient statue was removed from the doorway and replaced by another in which the Bishop's crozier was deliberately shortened so that it no longer touched the dragon's throat; this was done to thwart the alchemists and spoil their tradition. The difference can be seen in Fig. 345, where the sixteenth-century statue is shown just as it was before 1860. Viollet-le-Duc had it taken away and replaced it by a fairly exact copy of the statue in the Musée de Cluny, thus restoring its true alchemic significance to the doorway of Notre-Dame.

In conclusion I shall draw attention to a more recent symbolism, of which only one example seems to be known—that of *La Très*

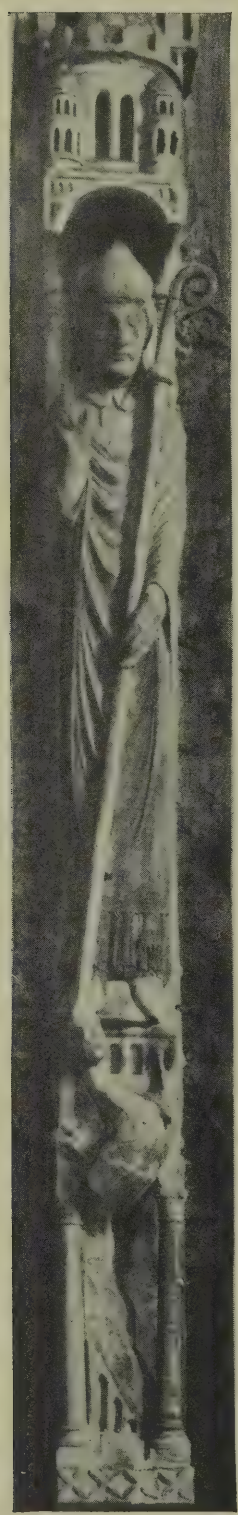


Fig. 344 (*left*). The Philosopher's Stone
Alchemic hieroglyph on the doorway of Notre-Dame at Paris. Fourteenth century.
Musée de Cluny.

Fig. 345 (*right*). Sixteenth-century Statue, replaced about 1860 by a Copy of the Original Figure
Doorway of Notre-Dame at Paris.
Author's collection.

sainte Trinosophie, executed in the eighteenth century and preserved in the Library at Troyes. Two coloured plates from this manuscript are reproduced in the present work. It is attributed to the famous Comte de Saint-Germain (Fig. 346), one of the most enigmatic personages of the eighteenth century—an alchemist and man of the world who passed through the drawing-rooms of all Europe and ended by falling into the dungeons of the Inquisition at Rome, if the manuscript is to be believed. This author's symbolism is Egyptianized in the fashion of the day. On the title-page of the work, which I have reproduced in its entirety (see plate facing p. 216), we find, presented in another shape, the bird of Hermes, a tree with golden fruit and a vase in which the Work is achieved, the primitive material under the form of a ball embraced by two wings, and a luminous triangle containing the Divine Name. All this symbolism can be easily related to that previously discussed. In the second plate (see plate facing p. 308), which represents a man gazing into a prophetic cup forming a magic mirror, the conjoined signs of the Sun and the Moon are seen against the pedestal of the table; at the top of the figure a superposition of differently coloured rectangles indicates the phases of the Work; and the double sign of the lingam in a circle emblematically recalls the hermetic male and female. An inscription in Greek letters and made-up characters gives a formula for the composition of Gold, or the Sun-King, by means of a mixture of gold and silver regenerated by vital mercury; linked to the blue rectangle giving this formula is a lower red rectangle inscribed with the rule for the furnace fire in Hebrew characters.

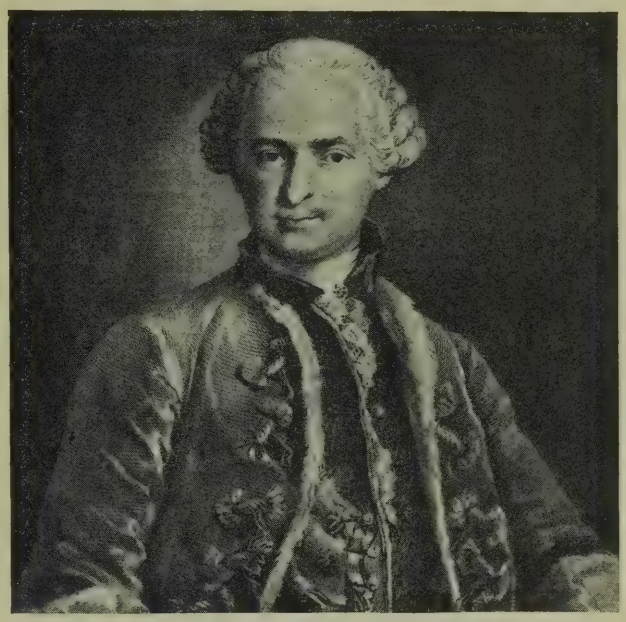


Fig. 346. The Comte de Saint-Germain, an Eighteenth-century Alchemist
Portrait engraved by Thomas.

II

THE ALCHEMIC MATERIAL AND THE OPERATIONS OF THE WORK

THE symbolic iconography of the Great Work indicates a luminous, unvarying, and very sure method, thanks to which the adept cannot go astray if he follows it exactly.

But the clearer alchemists are in their hieroglyphs the obscurer they are in their writings. The goal of alchemy is the attainment of the Philosopher's Stone, which enables base metals to be transmuted into gold, but alchemistic authors—Nicolas Valois, for instance—take pains to warn us that it is not a stone. "It is a Stone of great virtue," says he, "and is called a Stone and is not a stone." None of the experts make any difficulty about admitting that the primitive material of alchemy is mercury; not common mercury, they hasten to add, but the Mercury of the Philosophers, which is quite another thing. The Arab Geber, in his *Summa perfectionis,* says that "Mercury, taken as Nature produces it, is not our material or our physic, but it must be added to." All give us to understand that common mercury, purified, revivified, and quickened in a certain fashion, might well be the Mercury of the Philosophers. Cosmopolite, in his *Dialogue entre Mercure et l'alchimiste,* says that "this last is the true Mercury; common mercury is only its bastard brother." This mercury has to be changed into water, according to Synesius, Ripley, and the *Sept chapitres* of Hermes; but we must take care that this water is a "water which shall not wet the hands." The operation is performed by the conjunction of the three great principles, salt, sulphur, and mercury, and all three must be the respective substances of the philosophers and not those commonly designated by these names. Roch le Baillif, in his *Demosterion* (Paris, 1578), says that "Sulphur is everything that burns, mercury what goes into air and consumes itself in vapour, and the residue is salt." Arnauld de Villeneuve, in his *Commentaire sur Hortulain*, adds "the mixture of three things is called the Blessed Stone, mineral, animal, and vegetable, because it has no proper name; mineral because it is compounded of mineral things, vegetable because it lives and vegetates, and animal because it has a body, a soul, and a spirit, like animals."

The four elements are called in to aid in the Work. In a treatise by Arnault, Sieur de la Chevalerie, we find that "the two metallic dragons or serpents are engendered in the entrails of the operations of the four elements; these are the radical humidity of sulphur and quicksilver—not the common, but the philosophic."

The Work must be animated by a Breath, which is the same as that Spirit of the Lord which moved upon the face of the waters at the beginning of the creation of the world.

According to the alchemistic poet, Jehan de Meung, in the *Roman de la Rose*, line 17049, the operation could be summarized in a simple metallic purification: "Thus might he with metals do who knows well how to gain his end with them and to rid them of their dross and to bring them into a pure state." Or, as Nicolas Valois says, it is rather the extraction "of the quintessence most pure, which abounds more in gold than in any other thing. Common gold is dead and is naught but earth, but in it none the less is hidden the Gold of the Philosophers, which is the said quintessence, which is the life and soul of the said common gold."

There is a masculine principle and a feminine principle in the Work. In his *Livre des Figures* Nicolas Flamel says that "In the second operation thou hast two conjoined and married natures, the masculine and the feminine, and they are fashioned in one sole body, which is the androgyne of the ancients, formerly called likewise the raven's head or element transformed." This phase of the operation is of prime importance, and is figured in all the treatises by the symbol of the Hermetic Androgyne. As the frontispiece to this work I give a remarkable example of this symbol taken from a German manuscript entitled *Dritter Pitagorischer Sinodas von der verborgenen Weisheit.*

Elsewhere the operations are designated sometimes under a symbol, sometimes by an actual name; but alchemists conceal their exact number, or, rather, in order to baffle the vulgar, reckon among the operations mere phases of the Work which are not operations properly so called. I have a valuable seventeenth-century manuscript which is a French translation of a work by the English alchemist Norton; it is illustrated by several figures of "philosophic trees" showing the order of the various operations necessary for transmutation. Here is the order of the fourteen operations constituting the first part, known as the white elixir, which has the purification of mercury for its foundation (Fig. 347). The first eight are the only authentic ones; they are called purgation, sublimation, calcination, exuberation, fixation, separation, and conjunction, with one of these doing double work, which reduces the actual number to seven. The seven others are not operations at all, properly speaking. According to certain alchemists, all the operations could even be reduced to one. Philalethes, in his *Enarratio methodica trium Gebri verborum*, tells us that "the terms distillation, sublimation, calcination, assation, reverberation, dissolution, descension, and coagulation are no more than one sole and single operation, performed in one and the same vase," and the *Rosarium* takes equal pains to warn us that "all the operations take place in our Water."

The phases of the Work are expressed by numbers and different colours ; among the latter three chief ones are discerned which can be readily found in all paintings with an alchemic signification. The first is black, which the adepts call " the raven's head, or blackest black, blacker than black itself " ; white appears next, and then the stone known as the " Stone of Whiteness "—that is to say, capable of transmuting metals into silver ; lastly, after a fresh rectification, the glorious colour of rubies shines out, and this is the colour of the " Stone of Redness," which can transmute metals into gold. Alchemistic authors launch into praises of the splendour of this last operation ; but in between the colour green evolves, the " Green Lion," and this stirs them no less to enthusiasm.

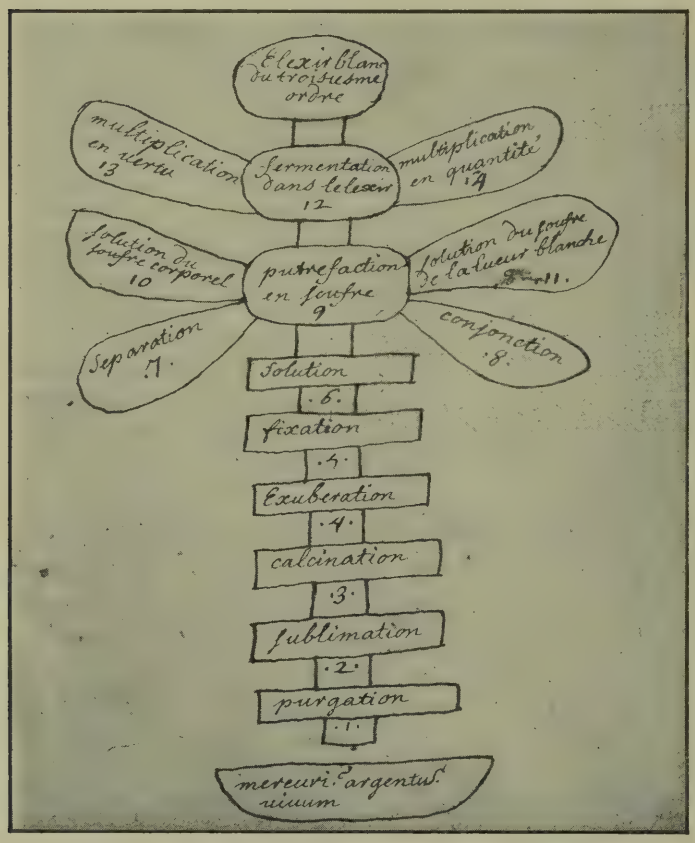


Fig. 347. Order of the Alchemic Operations
After the English alchemist Norton. Seventeenth-century manuscript. Author's collection.

Khunrath, in his *Amphitheatrum*, Third Degree, cliv, exclaims :

> O blessed Viridity, whereby all things germinate ! Learn, O Theosopher, to contemplate the Viridity which is Ruah Elohim ; thou, O Cabbalist, the green line which is the whirling Universe ; and Nature thou, O Magus ; and thou, O Physico-chemist, the Green Lion, *Duenegh viride Adrop*, the Quintessence !

Further on, in the Sixth Degree, ccxciv, he says :

> Long did I journey, and to those whom I believed to have knowledge of anything did I make my way. From one I had the universal Green Lion of God and the Blood of the Lion—that is, Gold—not the gold of the vulgar, but the Gold of the Philosophers. I saw it with my own eyes ; I touched it with my own hands ; I tasted it with my own tongue ; I smelt it with my own nostrils !

The operation of the Great Work is completed with fire, yet here again it is not common fire, which is a brutal and fratricidal fire, destroying instead of creating, but the Fire of the Philosophers, the Fire of the Sages, which does not burn at all,

Fig. 348. The Athanor and the Philosophic Vase

Les Figures d'Abraham Juif. Bibliothèque Nationale, manuscript *fonds français*, No. 14765.

but vivifies. The alchemist Pontanus says in his *Épître* that he went astray more than two hundred times, although he was working on the true material, because he did not know the Fire of the Philosophers. Another adept, very little known, Garchaole Lenselt, " merchant-goldsmith of Paris in 1756," in his treatise *Les Apparences de vérités et vraye pratique de l'Alchymie* (manuscript No. 3012 in the Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal), proclaims that

> he who knows how to sublimate the Stone philosophically justly merits the name of Philosopher, since he knows the Fire of the Sages, which is the sole instrument which can effect this sublimation; no philosopher has ever openly revealed this secret fire; he who does not understand it must halt here and pray to God that He may enlighten him.

The Vase, or Philosophic Egg, in which the Work is completed, is no less mysterious. It is known as the aludel, and the furnace which contains it as the athanor, and yet they are but one and the same thing. Philalethes says that " The vase is an aludel, not of glass but of earthenware; it must hold four-and-twenty Florence measures, neither more nor less." The manuscript entitled *Guide Charitable* (No. 3005 in the Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal) asserts, on the contrary, that the " Egg must be of good Lorraine glass, oval in shape or round, clear, and thick; . . . it must have a neck eight or nine inches long; it must hold four ounces of distilled water; it must be hermetically sealed."

Some alchemists, however, have consented to part with a small share of their secret on this point, and have incidentally revealed the shape of their athanor. Here is the Philosophic Vase, after *Les Figures d'Abraham Juif* (Fig. 348). The author of this manuscript urgently recommends that the vase should be luted " with the lute of Wisdom "—another secret which is not within the reach of everybody. Manget, in his *Bibliotheca Chemica*, gives another representation of the vase in elevation and section (Fig. 349), while warning us that the secret furnace of the philosophers is something different and that 'sealing the aludel' means 'fixing the mercury.' At the end of the first volume of his work there is a series of plates with no explanations called " Mutus Liber "; in two of these plates various personages applying themselves to the alchemic operations may be seen, as well as the external appearance of the Furnace of the Sages (Fig. 350), and in the second plate we note man and woman in the attitude indicative of prayer (Fig. 351). We will introduce further an ingenious system called the Cosmic Furnace by Annibal Barlet, in *Le vray Cours de Physique* (Fig. 352); by means of this the union of the three principles, sulphur, salt, and mercury, is effected, but the apparatus is itself probably only an emblem of the alchemic progression.

Apart from everything else, it would serve no purpose to know the true material

Fig. 349. The Philosophic Furnace: Elevation and in Section
Manget, *Bibliotheca Chemica* (Paris, 1702).

Fig. 350. The Preliminary Operations of the Philosopher's Stone
Manget, *Bibliotheca Chemica*, " Mutus Liber."

Fig. 351. The Final Operation and the Hermetic Apotheosis
Manget, *Bibliotheca Chemica*, " Mutus Liber."

of the Philosopher's Stone, or the true Fire, or the true Vase, if the Work were not begun at the propitious moment, calculated astrologically. Alchemists display great reserve on this subject. *La Scala philosophorum* says that the operations of the Stone must be undertaken when the Sun is in the sign of the Ram and the Moon in the sign of the Bull, which is perhaps only another symbol. According to the English alchemist George Ripley, the whole of the operations are perfected in a year, but Elias Ashmole is more explicit, and in his *Theatrum chemicum Britannicum* he gives four valuable astrological schemes (Fig. 353), indicating the states of the sky favourable to the division, separation, rectification, and conjunction of the elements. Although these figures are complicated enough, they will be easily read by all who have studied astrology to some small extent. It should only be pointed out that the first purifications take place when the Sun is in the Archer and the Moon in the Ram, while the Work is completed during a conjunction of the Sun and Moon under the sign of the Lion, which, yet again, may be interpreted symbolically, for the planets are nothing but the metals, and the athanor—which is a little world, a microcosm similar to the astronomical Cosmos—has its Zodiac, its poles, and its seasons. The manuscript so often quoted already, *Les Figures d'Abraham Juif*, pronounces on this subject in an explicit manner which confirms this supposition :

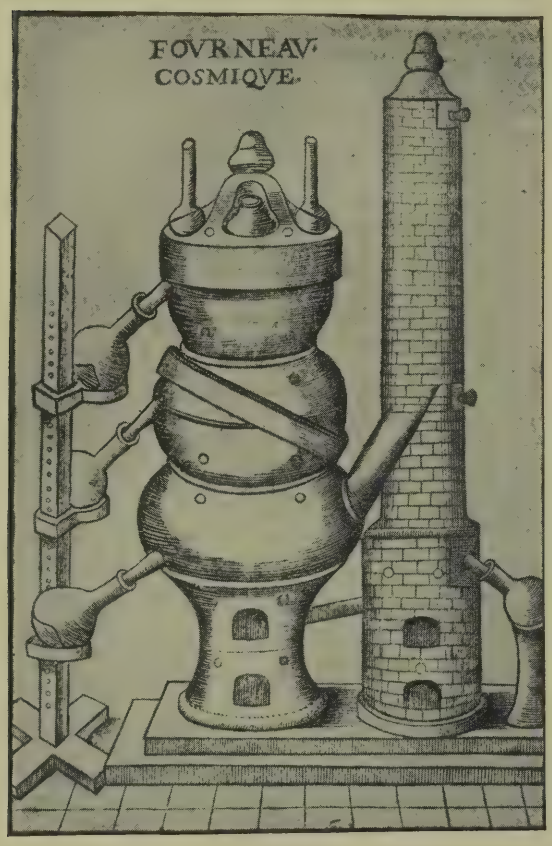


Fig. 352. The Cosmic Furnace
Annibal Barlet, *Le vray Cours de Physique* (Paris, 1653).

> The peasant prepares the earth in order to increase his seed, makes it grow, makes it ripen, harvests it, and turns it into flour ; he takes away the bran to make bread of the flour by means of leaven. Well considered, this manipulation is that of our Stone, provided that the seed be gathered in the mineral kingdom, that it be sown in its earth, that it be watered, that its dross be separated from it by means of our Soap. Then must it be made to pass through the four seasons of the year, and the autumn must be awaited to collect the fruit, to increase it, and to prepare the philosophic leaven.

The time necessary to complete the labours of the Philosopher's Stone is a year,

according to the majority of authors, but is lengthened to fifteen months by Raymond Lully, and to eighteen months, three years, seven years, and even twelve years by other alchemists. All these numbers are imaginary, and relate to a single symbolic and hieroglyphic system.

Fig. 353. Four Astrological Schemes for the Alchemic Operations

Elias Ashmole, *Theatrum chemicum Britannicum* (London, 1652).

III

THE LABORATORY OF THE ALCHEMISTS AND OF THE PUFFERS

IF the exceedingly numerous works left by the alchemists are attentively studied the reader very quickly sees that the operation of the Philosopher's Stone does not belong to the realm of pure chemistry. The method described with so remarkable a unity of doctrine excludes any idea of research or tentative procedure, and is incompatible with the abundant experimentation involved in modern chemistry, both organic and inorganic. In this method we see the working of an eagerness, an inspiration, and a fertilizing and generative element showing that the alchemists had surprised some secret of cellular life which, carried into the metallurgic field, produced effects unknown now, owing to the fact that present scientific research has neglected to take its bearings along this path, plain though it is.

The *Guide Charitable* (manuscript No. 3005 in the Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal) states that " the whole expense of the Stone will not be very considerable ; the first elements of the Great Work cost little ; earthenware vessels, the furnace, charcoal, and various utensils suffice." And the result was inestimable. Nicolas Valois, in his *Cinq Livres*, informs us that " one grain of the metallic substance can be multiplied to an infinite number so long as the world lasts. For if one grain of the composition of the said Work increases a hundredfold, the second will increase a thousand, the third ten thousand, and the fourth a hundred thousand."

Furthermore, the Philosopher's Stone not only transmuted metals, but constituted the surest and most universal of medicines. Zachaire, in his *Opuscule très excellent de la vraye philosophie naturelle des métaux*, explains the use of it in this way :

> To use our Great King for restoring health a grain weight of it must be taken after its production and dissolved in a silver vessel with good white wine. The sick person must be made to drink this, and he will be cured in a day if the illness is of only a month's standing; if it is of a year's standing he will be cured in twelve days. To remain in perpetual good health he would have to take some of it at the beginning of the autumn and spring, made up in the form of a confected electuary.

But how many misfortunes overwhelmed poor alchemists who did not understand, or understood imperfectly, the value of their symbols ! In these circumstances they devoted themselves to considerable and costly researches, swallowed up

fortunes in the fire of their furnaces, and were scorned by the true alchemists, who called them 'Puffers,' from the noise of the bellows with which they blew up the fire. Sometimes, indeed, they discovered unexpected substances which were not the Philosopher's Stone, and thus contributed little by little to the creation of chemistry proper.

Breughel and Teniers, moreover, and other kindred souls did not fail to exercise

Fig. 354. Interior of a Puffer's Laboratory
Print by Breughel the Elder, engraved by Cock, sixteenth century.

their exuberant fancy at the expense of the puffers. What wreck and disorder reigns in this domestic interior by Breughel (Fig. 354), showing a Puffer working sedulously while his wife bewails her empty purse and his children, vainly seeking food in the bare cupboard, put pots and pans on their heads in derision. A large window opening out of the picture shows the same sham adept and his family, as a result of philosophy, going off—a last analysis—to take refuge in a poorhouse after he has wasted all his possessions. This print is one of the most valuable known on account of the information it gives respecting the details of laboratory equipment.

The two ' chemists ' by Teniers are more serious. One of them, engraved by T. Le Bas (Fig. 355), seems quite near to obtaining a result. His aludel has not cost him much—he has been content with a soup-boiler, but it is doubtful if his fire is really the Philosophic Fire. The other (Fig. 357)—by the same artist, but shown in an English engraving of 1750 by Major—if he does not get the Philosopher's Stone, should at least make a few methodical and duly observed discoveries. His assistants

Fig. 355. Chemist blowing his Fire
Painting by David Teniers, engraved by T. Le Bas.

are grinding substances and inspecting liquids ; they hardly suspect that they are being spied upon by an inquisitive person who has poked his head through a little window.

Then we have a piece of pitiless mockery and cruel jesting. Teniers has this time seated a monkey in front of a laboratory furnace (Fig. 358), the better to show the senselessness of the Puffer's toil. Finally, there is a Dutch caricature by L. Van Sasse, engraved by Wilhelm Koning in 1716 (Fig. 356), showing an unintelligent Puffer occupied in work the meaning of which he probably does not understand himself.

Fig. 356. The Marquis of Outrage-Nature in his Laboratory Dress
L. Van Sasse; engraved by Wilhelm Koning, 1716.
Author's collection.

It is hard to form a conception of the extreme complexity of the apparatus devised by the Puffers for their costly researches. A collection of these instruments may be seen in the reconstructed laboratory at the Musée Alsacien in Strasbourg. There is another truly astounding one in Gallery 78 of the Germanisches Nationalmuseum at Nuremberg. In glancing through the *Cœlum philosophorum*, as well as the works of David de Planis-Campy and Manget, one comes across numerous figures of retorts, alembics, and distilling appliances employed in the sixteenth and seventeenth

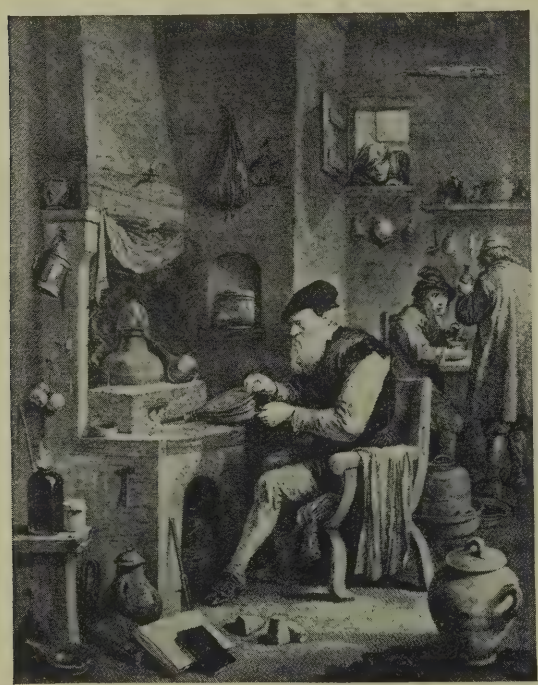


Fig. 357. The Chemist, his Assistants, and a Pryer

Painting by David Teniers, engraved by F. Major (London, 1750).

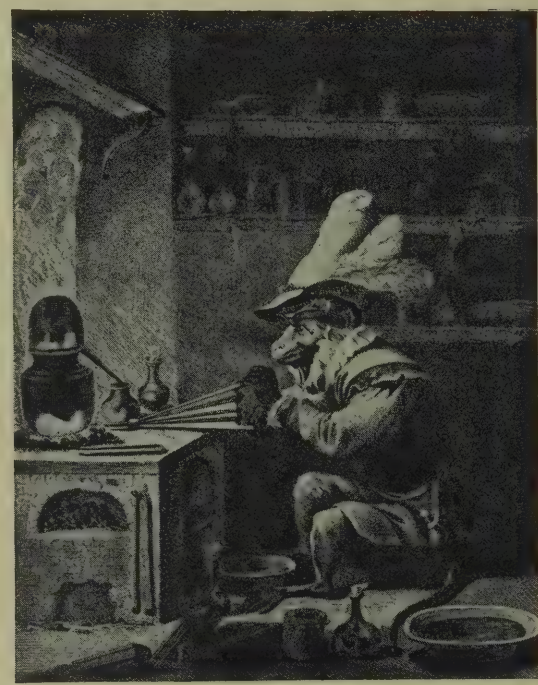


Fig. 358. The Pleasure of Fools

Painting by David Teniers, engraved by J. Basan.

centuries, but it was Mylius above all, in his *Basilica philosophica*, Book IV of the *Chymica* (Frankfort, 1620), who gathered together the greatest number of them. I choose two plates from this work at random (Fig. 359), which will suffice to give the reader an idea of the equipment with which the Puffers strove to imitate the alchemists.

We cannot fail to be forcibly struck by the elaboration of all this outfit when we remember the simplicity of the doctrine which the alchemists never ceased repeating —" A single substance, a single vase ! " But we can imagine what errors those without the key to the mystery would be drawn into when we find Nicolas Flamel himself—in his *Livre des Figures*—confessing that " During the long space of one-

and-twenty years I made a thousand blunders, not always with the blood, which is wayward and vile. For I found in my book that philosophers gave the name of blood to the mineral spirit which is in metals ; hence, never seeing the signs in my operation at the times written in my book, I had always to begin all over again." We can well understand, too, the famous outburst of Bernard, Count of the Trevisan Marches, in his work on the transmutation of metals: "Leave alums, salts, and all inky liquids ; borax, all biting acids, animals, beasts, and all that come out of them—

Fig. 359. Apparatus used by Alchemists and Puffers
Mylius, *Chymica : Basilica philosophica* (Frankfort, 1620).

hair, blood, urine, flesh, eggs—and stones and all minerals ; for our material must consist, according to all the philosophers, of quicksilver!" So the writer condemns, in one shattering phrase, all the seekers ignorant of the true way who spend their strength and money in vain and sterile efforts. Bernard the Trevisan, by the way, was suspected of being only a Puffer himself, and Nicolas Valois refuses him the credit of ever having known the true formula for the Philosopher's Stone! "Count Bernard," he says, "had no skill in that science which he believed he knew perfectly."

Denis Zachaire, another alchemist who strayed a long time before finding the true and natural way, has left an impressive picture of that fever of research which possessed numbers of people in the sixteenth century, with an intensity comparable

to the speculative mania which excites so many persons nowadays. This is how he describes his arrival at Paris, in his *Opuscule très excellent de la vraye philosophie naturelle des métaux* :

> After I had begun to keep company with artisans, such as goldsmiths, smelters, glass-makers, furnace-makers, and divers others, I so accustomed many of them to me that not a month had passed before I was acquainted with more than a hundred workers. Some

Fig. 360. Chemical Laboratory at Utrecht
Barckhausen, *Elementa chymiæ* (Leyden, 1718).

> laboured on the tinctures of metals by projection, some by cementation, some by dissolution, some by conjunction of the essence, as they said, of Lemery, and some by long decoctions ; others worked on the extraction of the mercuries from metals, and yet others on the fixation of the same ; in such sort that not a day passed, even feast-days and Sundays, without our gathering either at the lodging of some one of us (and very often at mine) or at the great Notre-Dame, which is the church of most resort in Paris, to debate the tasks of the days preceding. Some said, " If we had the means of beginning again we should do something of worth " ; others, " Had our vessel held, we should have attained it " ; others, " If we had had our vessels of copper, well rounded and tightly closed, we should have fixed our mercury by the Moon " ; and thus there was not one of them who had done any good and who was not full of excuses, so much so that on this account I made small haste to give them money, knowing already and being well aware of the great expenses which I had made aforetime on the faith and assurance of others.

Happily for himself, Zachaire gave up this worthless company, and by applying himself exclusively to reading the ancient alchemists of the Greek and Arab schools he succeeded in transmuting mercury into gold at Toulouse on Easter Day 1550.

But such success was a thing of the rarest; the strayed seekers were far more numerous than the true adepts, and it certainly seems to me that the "Chemical laboratory at Utrecht" in the plate decorating Barckhausen's *Elementa chymiæ* (Fig. 360) is also nothing but the laboratory of a wise puffer in process of becoming a chemist simply, and thus preparing the way for Priestley, Cavendish, and Lavoisier. And such a course of lectures in transmutative chemistry—given in public, in contrast to the alchemic initiations, which were performed in private—as we see being delivered in the plate from Annibal Barlet's *Le vray Cours de Physique* (Fig. 361) likewise seems to exhibit nothing but apparatus which adepts would have disowned.

Fig. 361. Opening of a Course of Lectures in Transmutative Chemistry
Annibal Barlet, *Le vray Cours de Physique.*

Fig. 362. The Street of the Alchemists at Prague as it is at Present

The laboratory of the true alchemists was much simpler. They still show at Prague the modest houses inhabited by the adepts brought there in the sixteenth century by the Emperor Maximilian II, who hoped to restore his involved finances by their help. The famous John Dee and his companion

Edward Kelly were found among this company. They forgathered in the Street of the Alchemists, or Street of Gold—Zlata Ulicka, as it is called to-day (Fig. 362)

Fig. 363. The True Alchemic Laboratory
Elias Ashmole, *Theatrum chemicum Britannicum.*

—which contains only very small dwellings in which none but laboratories on a minute scale could have functioned. The two pictures borrowed from Elias

Ashmole's *Theatrum chemicum Britannicum* prove this simplicity beyond dispute. In the first (Fig. 363) the alchemist has the elements of the Great Work in front of him. "Compound the Stone without repugnance" is the warning given by an inscription suspended above his head. An assistant is separating "the earth from the fire, the tenuous from the thick"; a second is putting the compound into a suitable vase and noting the colours. In the second plate (Fig. 364), the great alchemists Geber, Arnauld de Villeneuve, Rhasis, and Hermes himself, as a crowned king, are enunciating the great laws of transmutation. "Grind, grind, without slackening," says the first. "Let it drink in as much as it may, and up to twelve times," says the second. The third enjoins, "As many times as the substance has soaked itself, so many times must it be dried." And lastly Hermes commands, "Scorch and roast that white brass, until it cause itself to germinate of its own force."

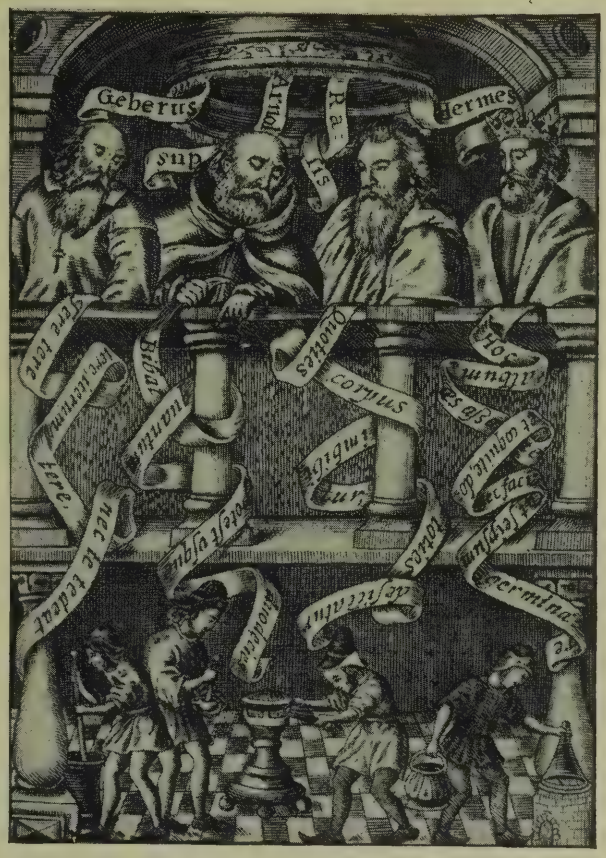


Fig. 364. Laboratory Operations inspired by the Masters
Elias Ashmole, *Theatrum chemicum Britannicum.*

We have the ideal laboratory to end with, and the author of the *Amphitheatrum æternæ sapientiæ*, Heinrich Khunrath, presents it to us (Fig. 365). By an ingenious play upon words he calls it "Lab-Oratorium," intending to express in this way, as other alchemists have already taught us, that the Stone is a blessing to be obtained only from God Himself; and that the efforts of the adept will only be crowned with success if he prays the Creator of all things to lend His aid to a work which is a minute imitation of the Creation. This is why Khunrath has shown himself on the left, praying to God before a tent, in imitation of the Israelites in the desert. The incense smokes, and Solomon's Seal shines upon the table. To the right of this sumptuous gallery, which to-day would be the Hall of State of some *Rathaus* in an old German town, the laboratory is seen, fitted with alchemic apparatus, a very curious model of the philosophic vase being in the foreground.

I will end here by wishing that those of my readers who have understood the bearing of all these hieroglyphs, and have impressed upon their minds the counsels

of these old masters, may have the luck to succeed and be able to say with Nicolas Flamel, in his *Livre des Figures* :

> It was upon the seventeenth day of January, a Monday, about noon, in my house, Perrenelle alone being present, in the year of the restoration of the human lineage one thousand three hundred and eighty-two, that I made the projection on mercury and converted half-a-pound or thereabouts of the same into pure silver, better than that of the mine. And then afterward I did so with the Red Powder upon a like quantity of mercury, in presence once more of Perrenelle alone, in the same house on the twenty-fifth day of April about five o'clock in the afternoon, which mercury I verily transmuted into almost as much pure gold, very certainly better than common gold, softer and more flexible. I can say this with truth. I have thrice perfected it with the help of Perrenelle, who understood it as well as I myself.

" Which thou wilt do as I did it," adds Nicolas Valois, who succeeded as well as Flamel, " if thou wilt take pains to be what thou shouldest be—that is to say, pious, gentle, benign, charitable, and fearing God."

Fig. 365. The Oratory and the Laboratory
Heinrich Khunrath, *Amphitheatrum æternæ sapientiæ* (Hanau, 1609).

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Fig. 366. The Universal Work of the Alchemists
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